Christopher Lasch on the Patron Saint of 'Human Potential'

Morton Kondracke on the Return of the Ugly American

T44017RITZZZZFH TNR 0979
RITTER LIB PERIODICALS
BALDWIN WALLACE COLL
BEREA, OH 44017

THE NEW REPUBLIC

RITTER LIBRARY
BALDWIN-WALLACE COLLEGE

March 31, 1979 Price One Dollar

The Folly of Writing—*Paul Robinson*

Russians Eye the West's Decline • Lowell Weicker's He-Man Strategy

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A NEW* CHALLENGE!

PIT YOUR CHESS SKILLS AGAINST THE COMPUTER!

CHOOSE YOUR LEVEL OF PLAY!

*NEW!

10 LEVELS OF PLAYING DIFFICULTY!

From Beginner to Advanced to Expert!

You choose your opponent's level of playing difficulty – from novice to expert. You choose black or white pieces. You enter your initial move. In seconds, the computer analyzes all possible countermoves and makes its best move. Day or night, Chess Challenger "10" is ready to give you a classic battle. The computer will sharpen your game and is the perfect teacher with features like:

- A library of classic book openings
- Random responses – no two games alike
- Does not permit you to make illegal moves
- Solves mate-in-two problems
- Position verification by computer memory call
- Analyzes as many as 3,024,000 board positions
- Double move entry for castling and handicapping
- Hand carved, magnetized French Chess Pieces

Chess Challenger "10" provides the flexibility and variety for a lifetime of classic chess battles. Accept the challenge and order yours today!

U.S. Chess Federation Master has rated the Chess Challenger "10" the best computer chess game and it is "highly recommended".

SPECIFICATIONS:

CHESS CHALLENGER® "10" is housed in a solid walnut case, 13 x 8 x 1-1/4" with felt foot pads. Simulated leather and gold foil playing area and keyboard. U.L. approved 110 volt A.C. 100% solid state for years of trouble-free use. No batteries used.

ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE! ORDER YOURS TODAY!

____Yes, please send____Chess Challenger(s)"10"–$275.00 each plus $8.00 each for shipping and insurance. I understand this is the game rated "best" by the United States Chess Federation.

_____My check is enclosed (N.Y. residents add 5% sales tax).

_____Charge my credit card no._____

_____Visa____Master Charge____Amer. Express Exp. Date _____

Signature_____

Name_____

Street_____

City_____State_____Zip_____

Send to: THE PLEASANTVILLE PLAN, Dept. NR-II
62 Eastview Ave., Pleasantville, N.Y. 10570

Order Toll Free 800-243-5676 – 24 Hours per Day – 7 Days per Week
(Connecticut Residents Call 1-800-882-5577)

©1978 The Pleasantville Plan

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TRB

from Washington
March 31, 1979

Meanwhile, Back at the Ranch

Have you subtracted Line 10b from Line 10a yet? Have you added Lines 8, 9 and 10c through 20 (total income)? If you haven't, Government Form 1040 is waiting for you; April 15 is closer than you think. If you have, then you know what it is to be bitten by income tax in an inflation year. Last year's pay increase saved your life, you thought. Ha, it just put you in a higher bracket.

Suddenly, in the midst of all the Washington highjinks over signing the new Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty, Carter and the nation are brought face to face with practical matters at home: inflation, energy crunch and, likely, a recession. They are shaping up into the possibility of one of the biggest economic tests since the Big One under Herbert Hoover, 50 years ago. They not only will affect Carter's reelection chances, not only risk a serious increase in unemployment, but also threaten a change in America's lifestyle.

I can think of no president in modern times who has had such an inheritance of complex, intractable contradictory problems at one time. Jimmy Carter's Middle East peace treaty is a splendid achievement; all credit to him. (I'd feel safer, though, if he'd leave some of it to Secretary Vance and not impulsively jump on the Niagara tightrope of personal diplomacy himself.) In any event, the American man in the street says, Fine for Jimmy, but I want to get back to my own domestic problems.

But domestic and foreign problems are merging more and more. The man who drives to work in an avenue crowded with other one-man vehicles is engaging in foreign affairs. Did he ever hear of Abu Dhabi (population 59,000), Dubai (49,000), Sharja (31,500)? Probably not. They are members of the United Arab Emirates, however, who have oil; they are boosting the price; yes, they are pretty little sheikdoms whose mandates make mighty America tremble. They are part of the Organization of Petroleum Export Countries (OPEC) whose ministers meet in Geneva on Monday, March 26, and who are on the road to give us one dollar gasoline. Why not? Gasoline already costs $1.50 a gallon in Europe.

The trouble with dollar gasoline now, of course, is that it comes in the midst of inflation; the more oil we buy, the more our trade deficit grows and the dollar slumps. It is foreign affairs in a variety of ways. Why are we so anxious about Saudi Arabia and Iran? Because with five percent of the world's population we use 30 percent of the world's energy, and the suburbanite in his one-man car wants to drive to work in the morning.

Simultaneously, Carter's two economic policemen, Schlesinger on energy and Alfred E. Kahn on inflation, say that voluntary restraints aren't working. I will come back to Kahn in a minute. Schlesinger notes that oil "demand continues to exceed expectations." In the past month American demand for oil passed 21 million barrels a day for the first time in history; our spare reserves are enough for only about five days.

How did this come about? I know no better way of saying it than that the United States had a breakdown of government for two years. The anniversary is just coming up. On April 20, 1977, Jimmy Carter sent Congress a detailed National Energy Plan with a solemn message of warning that a crisis was building up. The crisis has since appeared. Part of the Carter program was a tax on gasoline which, as the *New York Times* recently put it, "Congress hooted down."

The business community and the conservative legislators could not accept this irresponsible attack on America's lifestyle. Their attitude was most pungently expressed in the *Wall Street Journal* editorial, printed last year on the first anniversary of the Carter program. It was wittily entitled "MEOW" after Carter's appeal that this was the moral equivalent of war.

There was no energy shortage, the *Journal* explained; "In California, crude oil is a drug on the market. . . . US oil imports are no longer growing . . . over the year the price of oil has been steady . . . the President, Czar Schlesinger and the like continue to assure us that the energy crisis is just around the corner . . . consumers are reducing their energy consumption by about two percent yearly . . . oil is flowing from Alaska and exploration has started off the Atlantic coast. . . . Mr. Carter proposed to 'cure' this [the assumed shortage] by taxing domestic oil and using the proceeds to subsidize the consumption of home heating oil. . . ."

The editorial concluded, "The only way there will be an energy crisis in 1985 is if the government causes one. While the administration still has not grasped this, the biggest change since MEOW was declared a year ago is that more of the public and more of Congress now understand."

I hope the *Journal* won't think I am catty to bring this up.

While Schlesinger was telling the Senate Energy Committee last week that the "call for voluntary conservation isn't working," inflation adviser Kahn was watching this erosion of his voluntary wage-price guidelines. Unions were supposed to hold wage increases to seven percent with a wage insurance plan from Congress to compensate them if inflation passed that percentage. Kahn praises unions, so far, for their moderation but deplores high corporate profits. Last week the government reported business profits surged 26 percent over the previous year—the first three months of Carter's anti-inflation drive. A "catastrophe," said Kahn! The big Teamsters contract expires this week, and they are asking for double the proposed guideline. A House committee balks at passing the wage insurance plan. The voluntary system isn't working.

Will recession check inflation? The present business expansion, now four years old, is one of the longest in history. When the cruel wave breaks it could bring serious unemployment. That would start off another cycle; the rule-of-thumb is that each one-percent increase in unemployment adds $15 billion to the debit side of the budget, deficit or not. America's mood could change overnight.

Could Carter lead in such a pass? Could he inspire the discipline and sacrifice that the nation would need? Has he the charisma, eloquence and power? Nobody knows.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AMERICAN INCOME LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY of INDIANA

Serving America's Union Families

Comparative Financial Review

	Years ended December 31, 1977	1976
Income		
Life premiums	$22,340,297	$16,150,742
Accident and health premiums	25,683,413	23,593,214
Investment and other income	4,799,481	4,090,525
Total income	52,823,191	43,834,481
Benefits and expenses		
Life claims and other benefits	4,126,231	3,735,055
Accident and health claims	12,430,024	11,644,002
Increase in liability for future policy benefits	12,196,239	8,711,984
Amortization of policy acquisition costs	5,183,133	4,431,061
Commissions	5,943,151	5,224,771
General expenses and insurance taxes	5,869,697	5,652,642
Dividends to policyholders	298,064	299,032
	46,046,539	39,698,547
Income before income taxes and realized investment gains (losses)	6,776,652	4,135,934
Provision for income taxes		
Current	—	—
Deferred	1,909,150	1,209,252
Income before realized investment gains (losses)	4,867,502	2,926,682
Realized investment gains (losses)	11,364	356,057
Net income	$ 4,878,866	$ 3,282,739
Earnings per share		
Income before realized investment gains (losses)	$ 2.88	$ 1.76
Realized investment gains (losses)	.01	.21
Net income	$ 2.89	$ 1.97

Assets	$116,000,000
Insurance in Force	$1,289,599,000

AMERICAN INCOME LIFE INS. CO.

a union label company serving American union families. It is publicly owned with 4800 stock holders and with assets of approximately 116 million dollars. If you would like an annual report, write to:
Bernard Rapoport, Chairman of the Board
P.O.B. 208, Waco, Texas 76703

Contents

TRB from Washington	3	Meanwhile, Back at the Ranch
Comment	5	Zero-Based Politics
John Osborne	6	White House Watch: Energy Options
	7	Correspondence
Stephen Chapman	10	Pretenders to the Throne: Hard Nose
Morton Kondracke	12	Ugly American Redux
Robert Herr	15	Spengler in Moscow
Roger Morris	17	Phantom Border
William J. Quirk	18	Dollars for Detente
Paul Robinson	21	Why Write?
		ARTS AND LIVES
Stanley Kauffmann	24	Films: Filming Filming
Simon Karlinsky	25	Andrei Platonov: 1899-1951
		Books Considered
Christopher Lasch	30	*On Becoming Carl Rogers* by Howard Kirschenbaum
William H. McNeill	31	*Imperial Nomads* by Luc Kwanten
William Sweet	33	*Imbalance of Power* by John M. Collins and Anthony H. Cordesman *The Price of Defense* by The Boston Study Group *Force Without War* by Barry M. Blechman and Stephen S. Kaplan
Gail Mazur	36	Poem: "Anomie"
Jack Beatty	37	*John Ford* by Andrew Sinclair
Washington Diarist	42	Cover-Up

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Politics and the Arts, Vol. 180, No. 13, Issue 3351, March 31, 1979. Published weekly (except the issues of July 14, July 28, August 11, September 8) and distributed by The New Republic, Inc., 1220 19th Street, N.W. Washington, DC 20036. Phone (202) 331-7494. Single copy, $1.00; Yearly subscriptions, $24; foreign, $27; students $17.

Send all remittances and correspondence about subscriptions, undelivered copies and changes of address to Subscription Service Department, The New Republic, P.O. Box 705, Whitinsville, MA 01588. Unsolicited manuscripts are welcome, but cannot be considered or returned unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Copyright 1979 by The New Republic, Inc. (ISSN 0028-6583). Item g. Second class postage paid at Washington, DC and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Readers' Guide.

Cover: "The Poor Poet" (1839) by Carl Spitzweg. Courtesy of The Granger Collection. Article on page 21.

Staff

Editor—*Martin Peretz*
Publisher—*Robert J. Myers*
Managing Editor—*Michael Kinsley*
Literary Editor—*Jack Beatty*
Executive Editor—*Morton M. Kondracke*
Senior Editor—*John Osborne*
Politics Editor—*Ken Bode*
Assistant to the Editors—*Gwen Somers*
Films and Theater—*Stanley Kauffmann*
Poetry Editor—*Robert Pinsky*
Production Manager—*Dorothy Wickenden*
Literary Assistant—*Ann Hulbert*
Staff Writer—*Stephen Chapman*
Production Assistant—*Lisa Derman*
Contributing Editors—*Robert Brustein, Robert Coles, Henry Fairlie, Joseph Featherstone, Gerald W. Johnson, Nathan Lewin, Roger Morris, Joyce Carol Oates, Paul Robinson, John Seelye, Tad Szulc, Melville J. Ulmer, Michael Walzer*
Staff Photographer—*Jeff Vinson*
Circulation Manager—*Elizabeth Scanlan O'Brien*
Business Manager—*Rhonda Davis Schoem*
Assistant Business Manager—*Donna Melson Arthur*
Bookkeeper—*J. Kristine Klasman*
Director of Advertising—*Bonnie Perkel, 250 West 57th St, Room 2517, New York, NY 10019 (212) 581-6477*
Advertising Coordinator—*Elizabeth McGee*
Receptionist—*Ruby McGowan*
Staff Associate—*Robert Howard*
Leadership Network Advertising—*Robert F. Sennott Jr., New York (212) 682-4500*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEW REPUBLIC

March 31, 1979

Zero-Based Politics

President Carter's heralded "zero-based budgeting" hasn't worked very well. The idea was that every year each government agency, project and expenditure should be reevaluated from scratch. No item would be renewed automatically simply because it had been in the budget the year before, and established practices would have to compete for money on equal terms with untried proposals. In practice, the powers of inertia and continuity have proven more powerful than Carter had hoped. It turns out to be difficult to reconsider, say, nuclear aircraft carriers every year as if they represented a fresh concept for which nobody had developed a longstanding affection.

Nevertheless, we like this "zero-based" concept of Carter's. In fact, we think the general proposition that things as they are deserve no innate advantage should be applied to other aspects of public life besides the federal budget. Politics, for example. We think that President Carter does not have any preemptive right to renomination by the Democratic party simply because he is the Democratic incumbent. Any Democrat who secures the party's nomination should be able to count on general election support from those traditionally in sympathy with the party's goals. But the president is not entitled to suggest that it is illegitimate or disloyal for Democrats to consider—on roughly equal terms—other suitors for the nomination itself. He has no squatter's rights. In a democracy, he shouldn't have any.

Of course it's impossible for a sitting president and his rivals to compete on truly "equal terms." The practical advantages of incumbency are too great: the claims on people's attention; the free services; the ability to demonstrate by acting when others can only talk. These cannot be changed. All we wish to dispel is the psychological inertia that many Democrats—even those who adamantly opposed Carter in 1976—may feel as they face 1980.

This is not to say that we oppose the renomination of President Carter. Nagging as we often may have seemed, we're hard-put to identify anyone else—especially among the likely contenders so far—who we're confident could do much better in these awful times. Certainly we are not running President Carter in our minds against some dream candidates: more seasoned in foreign policy, better versed in economics, confident enough to surround himself with people unafraid to say no, charismatic enough to lead the Congress and the people toward the goals he sets. In fact one of the reasons we'd like to see an open Democratic primary is to help us make up our minds about Jimmy Carter, compared to others of the same political hue and not just compared to the sideshow collection of freaks chasing the Republican nomination.

Furthermore, a truly zero-based reassessment of the Democratic party's options must involve screening out the disadvantages of incumbency, as well as the advantages. It is not fair to compare President Carter's hard-won accomplishments, sparse as they may be, with the airy promises of his rivals. Unless there is reason to suppose that somebody else would be more successful at dealing with the feudal nobility in Congress, with intransigent foreign leaders, with the fickle American people themselves, we should discount the promises of pretenders to the throne by a ratio derived by comparing Carter's own promises in 1976 to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his accomplishments since then.

The only open Democratic contender for Carter's job is Governor Jerry Brown of California. Brown seems to be a man with almost perfect political pitch. He can sense currents running in the population and resonate accordingly. His advocacy of a constitutional amendment requiring the federal budget to be balanced is a case in point. Brown explains he is using budget deficits to serve as a symbol for other targets: the sagging dollar, poor productivity, increased oil dependency, the decline in savings and investment, the fading of American technological leadership and the inability to compete in international trade. "I think we have to put a greater emphasis on building for the future instead of stealing from it," Brown says. "We cannot have everything at once." We think Brown is fashioning a potent political theme for 1980, calling for Americans to stop indulging themselves and to put the country's productive energies to work again. We like many of the ingredients in Brown's stew ourselves.

But looking at Brown's specific proposals—not to mention his personality and public demeanor—inclines us to be highly skeptical about his seriousness and his judgment. The balanced budget amendment is bad economics and catastrophic political science. Balancing the budget is a dubious way of controlling demand in the economy; it does nothing—and Brown has proposed nothing—to increase American productivity. We were pleased to note last week that the Joint Economic Committee of Congress, in its first unanimous report in 20 years, concluded that greater attention to improving productivity is the way to attack the problem of stagflation. What the Democratic party needs are ways to do this that are compatible with our traditional liberal values, rather than with the reactionary folly of the Republican tax cutters.

The balanced budget amendment would set terrible precedents for constitutional law, encouraging pressure groups to seek change by altering the country's basic document, rather than by fighting to pass laws and elect candidates. Moreover, any budget amendment is likely to be violated by Congress—we would expect it to create a separate capital budget almost immediately, for example—which will only foster disillusionment in the public over its inability to work its will with the government. By joining this constitutional amendment crusade Brown is showing us that he has political pitch, but also that he is a pitchman.

But the real shadow hanging over President Carter and the rest of the Democratic party is not Jerry Brown. It is Edward Kennedy. Kennedy has eloquently formulated the traditional liberal critique of Carter's domestic program. To the extent that Carter's fate as a candidate hinges on his domestic performance, Kennedy's role as a spokesman for the more liberal and generous view of things could be very appealing to many Democrats. It is appealing to us. To the extent that Carter's problems derive from his inability to get any emotional response from the American people, the Kennedy magic could be decisive. (On foreign policy, Kennedy is no less confusing and disheartening than the incumbent.)

But will Ted Kennedy be a candidate? That's a question people have asked three times before: in 1968 after his brother Robert's assassination, in 1972 and again, the last time in 1976. He surely is acting like a candidate now, down to the ritual denial. Kennedy says he supports the renomination and reelection of President Carter. But if he's so opposed to Carter's policies, why should he support the man?

Will Church run? Will Moynihan? Will four or five others? These are interesting questions, though George McGovern seems unable to stir any interest in his quadrennial ambitions. None of these questions are critical, though. The critical question is Kennedy. He is the one from whom others—candidates, party pols, citizens—are waiting for a sign. Despite the denials, they have not gotten a convincing sign yet. There has been no Sherman statement.

Kennedy has a special role in the Democratic party, and a special responsibility. He owes it to the party, and to the liberal values he supports, to make his intentions absolutely clear one way or the other. Only then can Democrats start from zero and measure their candidates against their values.

White House Watch

Energy Options

After President Carter spent most of two days telling his own people and congressional leaders what a great thing he'd accomplished in bringing President Sadat and Prime Minister Begin into agreement on the essentials of a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel, he retired for rest and cogitation to Camp David, the retreat in the Maryland hills near Washington that Franklin Roosevelt established for himself and later presidents. Before and after his inauguration in 1977, Carter came near closing Camp David in the course of chopping the imperial presidency down to Georgia peanut standards. He soon learned to value the woodsy luxury, the absolute privacy and the superb service that Camp David and the Navy detachment assigned to it provide. On the first Friday after his trip to Cairo and Jerusalem and the interim of congratulation and promotion in Washington, he summoned Vice President Walter Mondale, Secretary of Energy James R.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Correspondence

Information requested

To the editors:

I am doing a film on the life of John Reed (the author of "Ten Days That Shook the World") and Louise Bryant (his wife) and would appreciate contact with anyone who knew either of them.

Warren Beatty
Paramount Pictures Corp.
5451 Marathon Street
Hollywood, California 90038

Japanese-American relations

To the editors:

Peter W. Stanley ("Our Good China/Bad Japan Syndrome," *TNR*, February 12) raises a useful cautionary note about the likely limits of our bilateral relationship with China. But the importance which this administration, as the two which preceded it, attaches to relations with the PRC does not derive from a misplaced sense of "intellectual opportunism or emotional self-indulgence." Rather it is the result of a rational appraisal of the reality of China and the importance to stability and world peace of good relations between us.

Still less accurate is Mr. Stanley's suggestion that we have downgraded the importance of US relations with Japan, or have turned to China because of displeasure with Tokyo.

Japan is a crucial treaty ally, a nation of people who share our commitment to democratic values, and the country with which we have the largest economic relationship that has ever existed between two non-contiguous countries. The Chinese themselves have told many Americans that US-Japan relations should have our priority; we have always felt that way. Mr. Stanley is correct when he cites the need to resolve our economic problems and when he says that "Sino-American relations have never offered us the real rewards involved in a successful, fruitful resolution of our ongoing relationship with Japan." (He is wrong, however, when he adduces the "free ride" argument to support his case. Japan's defense expenditures are the eighth largest in the world. And the Japanese have recently volunteered a significant increase in support for US forces stationed in their country, up to $700 million this year.)

There is no question that we face strong commercial competition from the Japanese in Asian markets. And we will meet it. But this is a far different matter from suggesting that Japan is not the most important nation in Asia for the United States. The fact is: Japanese-American relations, whatever their trade-induced tensions, form the cornerstone of our Pacific policy.

Richard Holbrooke
Assistant Secretary for
East Asian and Pacific Affairs
Department of State
Washington, DC

Scene change

To the editors:

Just a note on *TNR*'s cover of March 17. Your description of the cover photo is incorrect; any *Gone With The Wind* devotee will tell you that Scarlett O'Hara is most definitely *not* tending soldiers in your cover photo. Rather, she has come to the depot looking for Dr. Meade to assist in the birth of Melanie's baby.

Maxie Witkin
Alexandria, Virginia

Rhetoric and metaphor are not enough

To the editors:

I must take issue with Henry Fairlie's article on Jimmy Carter's lack of a sense of metaphor in his speeches and policies (*TNR*, March 10). While not one to argue forcibly for Carter's ability to speak in public and so raise the hopes and aspirations of a people, Fairlie is clearly taking a stance that would suggest that all one needs to do in government is to develop a phrase or two and then all will fall into place.

The times have changed and so, unfortunately for Mr. Fairlie, have the politicians that occupy the times. One may look for the voice of a Kennedy, which I don't, or that of another whose public presence alone can seemingly raise people to their feet, cheering. However, the time has come for people in government to speak on a normal level and so work to reevaluate the direction of a country without the pressure of metaphors and excessive rhetoric. No longer can we judge a man or a total administration on a few phrases or pet programs. Rather, we must look at a leader's and an administration's achievements, attempts and even failures in order to fairly pass judgment.

Rhetoric, metaphor, sleight-of-hand, and other devices are not enough. To paraphrase a former attorney general, "look at what they do, not at what they say."

Hillel I. Raskas
Madison, Wisconsin

Voluntary agencies for refugee resettlement

To the editors:

"The Moral Problems of Refugees" (*TNR*, February 10) accurately explains the ad hoc procedures of refugee admission to the United States. For some years Congress has attempted to bring about a refugee policy for the United States, especially under the Carter administration's proposed legislation, that would give this country a comprehensive refugee policy. The goal for enactment is May 1, 1979, but the wheels of Congress move painfully slowly.

Some 200,000 refugees are in camps in Thailand and Malaysia awaiting assurances for entry into third countries. What Mr. Walzer's article failed to point out is that these refugees cannot leave these camps for the US unless a sponsor can be found for them. This is a legal requirement under our present immigration laws. There is a pressing need to develop sponsorships now as the conditions in the camps continue to deteriorate, fresh water becomes nonexistent and the patience and tolerance of the Thai and Malaysian governments wanes. The eight voluntary agencies active in refugee resettlement need help now.

The following voluntary agencies, based in New York City, can provide information on sponsorships: American Council for Nationalities Service, American Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees, Church World Service, Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, International Rescue Committee, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, Tolstoy Foundation, and the US Catholic Conference.

John D. Tenhula
Church World Service
New York, New York

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Schlesinger, inflation counsellor Alfred Kahn, Treasury secretary Michael Blumenthal, domestic adviser Stuart Eizenstat and other senior assistants and advisers dealing with energy and inflation for a full day of consultation at Camp David on the following Monday. As is the President's habit, he made or anyhow disclosed no decisions at that meeting. He reserved the decisions for private thought after more consultation with advisers and with congressional leaders, and for public announcement on television. The announcement on energy and inflation policy would, if all went as planned, follow by two or three days a televised White House extravaganza showing Sadat and Begin signing and Jimmy Carter witnessing the Egypt-Israel treaty. Again, if all went as planned, the week of March 26 would be the week of weeks in the Carter presidency but surely not, sad to say, a week of unalloyed triumph.

Egyptian and Israeli quarrels over what the commitment to a treaty did and didn't mean in terms of Arab autonomy on Israel's borders, and the evidence—which shouldn't have been but was news to many Americans—that the cost of peace would be high in terms of increased US military and economic assistance to Egypt and Israel, had already dimmed the glow from Carter's Mideast success. There simply could be no glow from the energy and inflation decisions that Carter would be announcing. All of the prospects and all of the conceivable choices were grim. Here, written with no knowledge of the choices to be announced, is a catalogue of the choices open to him and of the dilemmas confronting him.

The central dilemma is partly of Carter's making, mostly the result of circumstances. Borrowing from the Nixon and Ford policies or—he insists—the non-policies he inherited, Carter in 1977 and 1978 based his domestic energy policy on the proposition that the more people had to pay for gasoline and heating oil and the more industry had to pay for furnace oil and natural gas, the less they would consume and the less oil the US would have to import. The American, European and world history of energy consumption shows there is something to this but not nearly as much as the Carter doctrine assumed. Congress in 1977 and 1978 didn't give him the price-boosting authorities he requested and denied him the price control and tax rebate measures he proposed to soften the overall impact on consumers. That ferocious and inescapable beast, the market in its world and domestic selves, made certain that prices would rise regardless of government policy. Our rapacious friends and non-friends in OPEC, the aggregation of foreign oil producers to whom our appetite for burnable energy has made us slave, stimulated and magnified the market forces that would have entrapped us and Carter in any event.

So now—cutting through much complexity—Carter, in figuring out what to say to the country, is struggling with contradictory facts. Increasing gasoline and other fuel prices in order to diminish consumption and thus diminish the drain that imported oil puts on our foreign-exchange resources must stimulate the rate of inflation, already near the disaster point and far beyond the level anticipated when the President and his unhappy inflation counsellor, Alfred Kahn, initiated the quasi-voluntary—never really all voluntary—wage and price guidelines system that they are trying to preserve. It is not a total flop but it failed to work anywhere near as well as was hoped.

Two constraints of Carter's personal making work against him. At the Bonn economic summit meeting last year the European and Japanese leaders made it clear to him that they considered the continuing high level of US oil imports a strain on the total world economy. Carter took a sort of rooster's pride in publicly agreeing and promising to bring average US prices for domestic crude oil up to world prices. At an International Energy Agency conference in February, he let his representative commit him to reducing US domestic energy consumption by the equivalent of a million barrels per day of imported oil. He has fulfilled neither promise and his chances of fulfilling them are poor. To Carter's credit, that sort of promise unfulfilled bears hard upon him as he prepares his energy and inflation report to the nation.

A law that was passed in Gerald Ford's time in 1975 but was proposed by Richard Nixon defines the most important options open to Carter. Carter seldom cites it, presumably because its existence contradicts his and his people's habitual assertion that there was no comprehensive, national energy policy and no serious effort to fashion one before he took office. Maybe we'd be better off if that were true, but it is not true. Ford, following up on Nixon, got more of his energy policy through Congress in 1975 than Carter did in 1977 and 1978. The major product of the Nixon-Ford effort is the Energy Production and Conservation Act of 1975. It imposes price controls, now about nine dollars below the world price, on most but not all domestically produced crude oil. It gives Carter the option of letting all controls on domestically produced crude oil lapse on May 31 and letting that price, and the prices of the gasoline and other products refined from domestic crude, rise to natural market levels thereafter. Or the President may choose to impose a system of gradually raised ceilings on domestically produced crude after May 31 and keep the controls in effect until September 31, 1981, when under the act all control would lapse. In 1977 and well into 1978, James Schlesinger and other Carter spokesmen said the President would never, never let controls totally lapse this May 31. At the Bonn summit, the first muted suggestion that he just might do this was floated and, back in Washington, quickly refuted. At this writing on March 22 it's a live option. But the dominant guidance is that Carter is inclined toward gradual decontrol, probably with some sort of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It's time to face facts

A coal-fired generating plant started in 1969 could be built in five years. Today, it takes seven just for the paperwork.

Outrageous, you say. We agree.

Time is big money in the electric power business. Every day of delay on a million-kilowatt generating station raises its cost by more than $300,000. And the consumer ultimately pays every dollar of that increase.

We, as consumer-owned nonprofit utilities, find that hard to take. Try as we might, we can't hold rates down when it costs six times as much to build a power plant today as it did a mere ten years ago.

Inflation is partly to blame, of course—but the fact is, today's unwieldy regulatory process accounts for almost one-third of the increased construction costs.

It seems to us that well-meant efforts to legislate and form sensible rules to guide energy development and use have gone awry. More and more, planners of power generating facilities are burdened with overlapping, cumbersome, and often inane rules and regulations that consume weeks and months of expensive time.

Ten years ago only two or three government permits were needed to build a coal-fired power plant. That figure's now 60 or more—and still going up.

Each permit takes time—lots of it—especially when the regulatory process is deliberately used as a weapon in efforts to block projects.

And time, as we said, represents money—lots of it.

We're not saying, "Down with regulation!"—far from it. A nation such as ours, as utterly dependent on energy as ours, *must* regulate its utility industries . . . sensibly. But let's be aware that regulation, like everything else, bears a price tag.

Let's not keep raising the price.

Reasonable and orderly regulation is in the public interest. Over-regulation is not.

A message from the nation's consumer-owned, nonprofit electric cooperatives and power districts.

For more information, write: Dept R, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, 1800 Mass. Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20036.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

wellhead or excess profits tax of the kind that the administration proposed in 1977-78 and Congress rejected.

Out of the welter of differing predictions of what the President may do and the accounts of conflicting propositions submitted to him comes an overwhelming impression that the Department of Energy under Secretary Schlesinger is a godawful policy and administrative mess. A formidable aggregation of senators who said as much in a letter to the President was told by him in reply that Schlesinger had a tough job, needed support, and had Jimmy Carter's support. My knowledge of Schlesinger, dating back to when he was an unknown national security specialist in the former Bureau of the Budget, suggests that a good man may have been given an impossible assignment to make sense of a senseless conglomerate of agencies.

On a lesser point, the expert evidence is overwhelming. Federal environmental requirements are creating a demand for unleaded automobile gasoline that will exceed supply in 1980 and a shortage that will be critical by 1981, regardless of what the President does, unless the capacity for refining unleaded gasoline is increased. The refiners' cry is that the increase can be accomplished only with higher gasoline prices and more tax incentives to build new capacity. That has yet to be proved.

John Osborne

Pretenders to the Throne.

Hard Nose

Hartford

The scene of Lowell Weicker's announcement of his candidacy for president was far from typical, and some might say less than auspicious. For his rendezvous with destiny, Weicker chose the Old Hartford State House, a 183-year-old building currently being renovated. The State House and its grounds were littered with lumber, scaffolds and paint buckets. Only a small courtroom on the first floor could be spruced up enough for the historic occasion. Outside, under a bronze statue of the Puritan minister Thomas Hooker, an anti-abortion group demonstrated against Weicker. Inside, some local "minority activists" did likewise. While Weicker read his statement, one demonstrator stood barely 10 feet away, holding up a placard with the demand, "Desegregate the Hill." The brief speech was vintage Weicker, busting up all the furniture in sight. He lamented the current political climate, "where Democrats and Republicans alike, in a cheap quest for votes, spit on the word government." He attacked the rising "tide of conservatism," and vowed a "hardnosed refutation of that kind of expediency." There was no statesmanlike consensus-building here.

His speech finished, Weicker answered questions from the press, including one from an apparent representative of the US Labor party, who asked a nearly interminable question about the European Monetary System and its potential effect on the Middle East, working in a plug for Lyndon LaRouche, the Labor party's own candidate. The press conference degenerated into bedlam when Ned Coll, head of a civil rights group, got up to ask Weicker about the number of minorities on his staff and to chide the assembled reporters for failing to ask Weicker themselves. He was shouted down by the press people and Weicker's supporters. That afternoon a Hartford radio broadcast reported that Weicker had become "the first serious presidential candidate from Connecticut in history." The reporter may have spoken a bit too hastily.

In this enterprise, Weicker apparently has the support of hardly anyone outside his staff and immediate family. He admits he is "the longest shot in the field" for the GOP nomination. He notes no endorsements from influential Republicans. Even his own state party chairman, Frederick Biebel, who has feuded with Weicker, is sitting on the fence. Similar obstacles only barely kept Ronald Reagan from unseating an incumbent president. But Reagan was able to mesmerize the deeply conservative voters who dominate Republican primaries; Weicker plainly, and admittedly, cannot do that. He insists, however, that he could beat Jimmy Carter easily if nominated. Weicker, an heir to the Squibb drug fortune, has the overwhelming self-confidence that often comes from inherited wealth and status. In answering the call to service from the people, Weicker is hearing voices audible to only a few. But like many other candidates, actual and likely, Weicker takes Jimmy Carter's example as proof that the experts can be confounded.

Nine years ago Lowell Weicker was so obscure a congressman that when he announced for Senator Thomas Dodd's seat, the *New York Times* referred to him repeatedly as "Weicher." But fortune blessed Weicker's Senate campaign. Dodd, who had been censured by the Senate for mishandling campaign money, stayed out of the Democratic primary. But then he jumped into the race midway as an independent, thus splitting traditionally Democratic voters enough to give Weicker a victory, with only 41 percent of the vote. Weicker made few friends among liberals in that race. He frequently painted his Democratic rival, the Reverend Joseph Duffey (then chairman of Americans for Democratic Action; now chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities), as a tool of the "far left." Weicker especially derided Duffey's supposed endorsement of amnesty for draft evaders. He said he

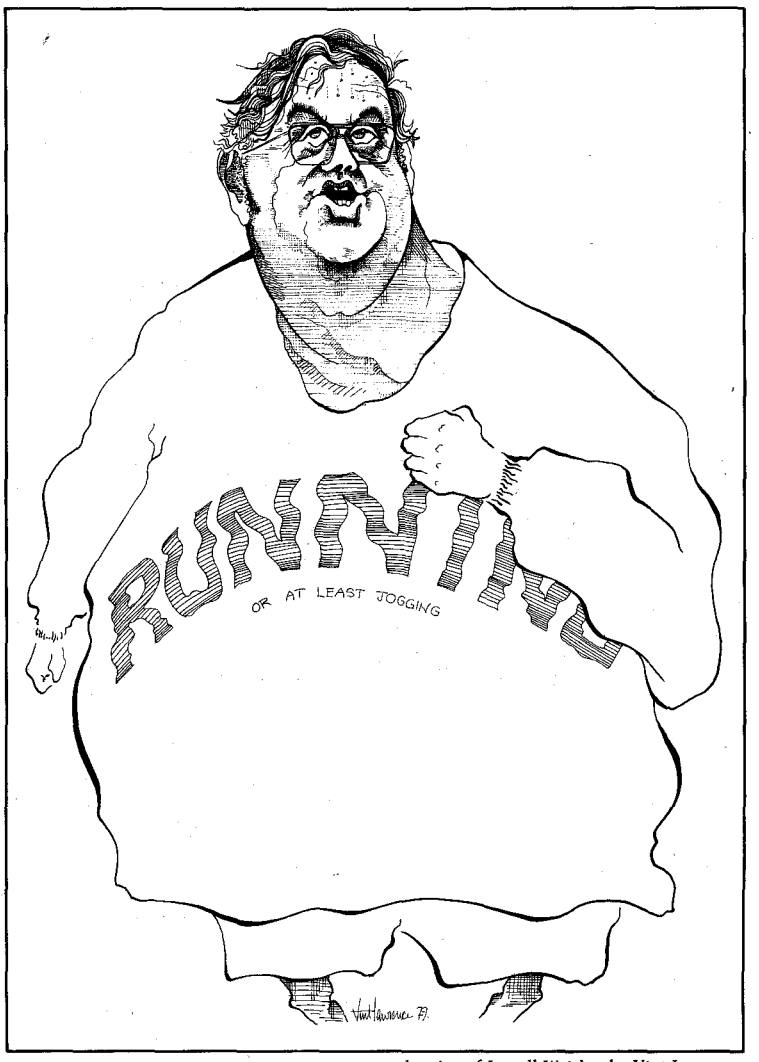
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

preferred instead a "nice jail cell" for them, "not only now but after the war is over." The Nixon White House initially counted Weicker as part of its "ideological majority" in the Senate, but quickly grew disenchanted over his votes against such pet administration projects as the anti-ballistic missile system, the supersonic transport and the federal loan to Lockheed. Weicker wasted no time in establishing his reputation as an unpredictable maverick. Having called for an end to the bombing of Vietnam in 1967 and for a US withdrawal during his Senate race (conditional on North Vietnam's return of American prisoners), Weicker opposed the McGovern-Hatfield amendment, which established a timetable for withdrawal. He later disagreed with Nixon's mining of Haiphong harbor and voted for the Cooper-Church amendment to cut off all funds for the war by the end of 1973. But he defended the US invasion of Cambodia, in characteristically unambiguous terms. The invasion was essential to the administration's policy, he said, and "the policy of this administration is a policy of withdrawal." Puzzled by Weicker's unpredictability and worried about the impending Senate hearings on Watergate, Nixon asked John Ehrlichman in the spring of 1973: "What the hell makes Weicker tick?" Ehrlichman replied: "Nobody's been able to figure that out."

Weicker came to national attention, of course, during those hearings, which gave him ample opportunity to display his indignant incredulity at the White House horrors. His frequent grandstanding soon became something of an embarrassment to the committee (although he did some valuable investigating on his own), but it burned Weicker's name into the public mind. When Weicker accused White House aide Charles Colson of planting a phony story about him, Colson paid him a visit to deny the accusation. The visit ended abruptly with Weicker saying, "Let me tell you something: you can get your ass out of my office, because you make me sick, and I don't even want you in here."

Weicker reserved his most melodramatic public performance for the day he got wind of a White House attempt to "intimidate" him. On national television during the hearings, Weicker proceeded to read Nixon and his henchmen out of the GOP: "Republicans do not cover up. Republicans do not go ahead and threaten. Republicans do not go ahead and commit illegal acts. And, God knows, Republicans don't view their fellow Americans as enemies to be harassed. . . . This Republican and those that I serve with look upon every American as human beings to be loved and won."

Weicker's showboat antics naturally stimulated speculation that he had his eye on the Oval Office. When the question first was raised, he dismissed it: "There's no way I could be president. I was born in Paris." (There is a possible constitutional obstacle here,



drawing of Lowell Weicker by Vint Lawrence

but since both of Weicker's parents were American citizens, he probably qualifies under the "natural born citizen" requirement.) A year later, Weicker maintained the same hard line. "The answer is 'No', period," he told *Esquire*. "Without a comma or semicolon. No way." During the hearings he said that running for president would make it look like he was exploiting the Watergate publicity. Asked about his recent change of mind, Weicker now says, "I wanted people to believe that I was not motivated by ambition, but by principled conviction."

Weicker frequently is criticized for his headline-hunting conduct, which sometimes looks like the crudest kind of demagoguery. Exhibit A, a particularly damning one, is his attack last year on Zbigniew Brzezinski. Berating the administration for what he thought was arm-twisting of Israel, he uttered this extraordinary analysis: "We know from history that time and time again, when national leaders ran into difficulties, they found it convenient to blame their problems on the Jews. And we know what were the results. If there is a meaningful distinction between those historical proclivities, and the signals which Brzezinski is sending today, I don't know what it is." Weicker might as well have called Brzezinski a Nazi.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The speech drew a sharp rebuke from the State Department, which quite precisely described it as "reprehensible, a gross misrepresentation of the facts, and demagoguery." The *Washington Post* did not exaggerate in calling the speech "disgusting." Even today Weicker recants not a word of what he refers to, with obvious satisfaction, as a "tough speech."

Toughness is a vital part of Weicker's self-image, and his unpredictable views are one way of demonstrating it. His favorite term of praise, usually applied to himself, is "hard-nosed." He naturally regards his aggressive image as a favorable contrast to President Carter's more restrained, thoughtful demeanor, which sometimes projects as weakness or indecisiveness. Weicker misses few chances to criticize Carter for his lack of "tough leadership." Like John Connally, he's banking on the traditional American myth of virility to carry him into the White House. But Weicker appears even more enraptured by the mystique of machismo than Connally is. He owns a trophy consisting of a large pylon with a pair of brass balls mounted on top, above the inscription: "You've got 'em, boy, you've got 'em."

Weicker's unpredictable votes owe more to his self-image than to either a particular ideological vision or an eagerness to pander to popular opinion. One has to give him credit for his willingness to adopt and defend iconoclastic positions; in fact Weicker sometimes almost appears to go out of his way to offend the voters. Last year he loudly denounced the anti-tax mood symbolized by Proposition 13. For years now he has evangelized for both gasoline rationing *and* decontrol of oil prices—a position that, besides being logically dubious, is guaranteed to anger almost everyone who holds an opinion on energy policy. One Democratic Senate aide who deals frequently with Weicker says, "There's no rhyme or reason to anything he comes up with. He takes a lot of positions he knows are unpopular, but he just thinks they're right." One may admire Weicker's boldness, but boldness for its own sake rarely yields intelligent policy.

Weicker knows that his unconventional views and his repudiation of the views of his party's right wing will not make him many friends among the party's rank-and-file. Republican audiences don't applaud politicians who praise, as Weicker did in his announcement, public housing, job training, federally subsidized health care and food stamps. Weicker's strategy, which isn't totally implausible, counts on two things: being the only liberal in a field crowded with conservatives, and being able to attract crossover votes from Democrats and independents in those states with open primaries. For the time being he's concentrating on the New England states—New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Vermont, and of course Connecticut. New England naturally looks like his best bet for votes; and victories in those states, which have early primaries, would provide any campaign with a big boost. The strategy is fairly conventional, but also rather far-fetched. Weicker and his aides have adjusted their perceptions of political reality to fit his ambition, instead of the other way around.

What kind of a president would Weicker make? His delight in unpredictability makes it hard to guess. On concrete issues Weicker is usually charmingly vague. Asked about the Carter administration's policy toward the Middle East, Weicker rails about the importance of "strong ties to Israel"; asked about the wisdom of a mutual defense treaty with Israel, he says, "I wouldn't want to generalize." Often Weicker's courage means he will come out foursquare and unequivocally for things like "integrity and idealism." All politicians talk this way much of the time, but one gets the feeling that Weicker doesn't really know when he's blowing smoke and when he's talking seriously. But more distressing is Weicker's equation of virility with sound leadership. A series of presidents preoccupied with proving the nation's manhood—in the Cuban missile crisis, the Vietnam War, the Mayaguez affair—may have cured the American people of their traditional idealization of "tough" presidents. What we should have learned—and what Lowell Weicker should hope we haven't—is that toughness and decisiveness are no substitute for intelligent policy, and that an insistence on looking tough and decisive no matter what often leads to disaster.

Stephen Chapman

What our diplomats don't know can hurt us.

Ugly American Redux

Americans . . . who cannot speak the language can have no more than an academic understanding of a country's customs, beliefs, religion and humor. Restricted to communications with only that special, small and usually well-to-do segment of the native population fluent in English, they receive a limited and often misleading picture of the nation around them.

—William Lederer and Eugene Burdick,
The Ugly American, 1958

After America's big surprise in Iran, horror stories tumbling out of the government suggest that US diplomats abroad are as ill-prepared and isolated as

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Lederer and Burdick portrayed them 21 years ago. It turns out that only six of the 60 US foreign service officers in Iran during the revolutionary year 1978 were minimally proficient in Farsi, not including the ambassador. The political section contained no one who was fluent in the language for much of the year, until a Persia expert was reassigned in the fall from duties handling African affairs for the State Department's United Nations desk. The Voice of America hasn't broadcast in Farsi since 1959, even though only a tiny fraction of the Iranian population speaks English. The VOA is just now gearing up to re-inaugurate Farsi broadcasts. In neighboring Afghanistan, the first two US embassy employees to arrive at the scene after US Ambassador Adolph Dubs was kidnapped were unable to speak Dari, the Afghan dialect of Farsi. In Pakistan, another key country in the so-called "arc of crisis," only five of America's 32 diplomatic officials are required to be minimally proficient in Urdu. In Somalia, nobody in the US embassy is required to know the local language.

In Kenya, only one officer of 22 in the US mission is required to speak Swahili. The State Department's reasoning is that most of the country's elite speak English. However, most of the country's non-elites do not. In the Soviet Union, almost all of the principal US diplomatic positions are language-designated, but the language required is Russian. Only one out of the 58 top US representatives is required to speak Ukranian, and none need speak Uzbek or any of the other Turkic tongues spoken by the Soviet Union's increasingly restive Moslem peoples. The State Department contends the Soviets don't allow US diplomats to travel around enough to use these languages, but even in Washington the US government has only two or three employees who are expert in the affairs of the Soviet Union's Central Asian peoples, who shortly will amount to a third of the Soviet population. When Deng Xiaoping visited the United States, and when American leaders visit China, the interpreter for top-level exchanges always is a Chinese. The US government has not a single fully bilingual interpreter of Chinese, or of Japanese either. A total of 12 foreign service officers are at the "4-4" level of fluency in Chinese—fully competent, but not native speakers—and 19 in Japanese.

Our Ugly American problems are not limited to lack of language proficiency. Jimmy Carter has a better record than many previous presidents for picking experienced diplomats to be ambassadors abroad. But he has chosen some Louis Searses, Joe Bings and George Swifts, as well. (They were the dolts we sent to fictional Sarkhan in *The Ugly American*). John West and Patrick Lucey were effective governors of South Carolina and Wisconsin, respectively, and early supporters of Jimmy Carter for president, but they had few qualifications to be ambassadors to countries as important as Saudi Arabia and Mexico. Neither speaks the language of his host country, though Lucey has been taking Spanish lessons. West, according to an experienced US official, is "totally out of his league" in Saudi Arabia and is insensitive to its politics and culture. He reportedly has tried to make pals with Crown Prince Fahd, but has alienated other important princes in the process. Lucey seems to have alienated many of the professionals on his embassy staff and also seems to have communicated to Mexican officials an unhappiness at being posted to their country. Top US officials contend that the US government has a woefully inadequate understanding of how Mexico works, close and increasingly important a neighbor though it is.

The White House has ordered several reviews of the quality of US representation and reporting. Last week President Carter's national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, wrote Representative Paul Simon of Illinois, a critic of US foreign-language education, that he had asked the Pentagon, State Department, International Communications Agency and Central Intelligence Agency to launch "a landmark study into the state of foreign language and international studies in the US." Brzezinski has been urging that US agencies overseas become more sensitive to political, social, economic and cultural trends in foreign countries, and concentrate less on specific items of current intelligence. In the aftermath of the convulsion in Iran, an inter-agency task force has been ordered to locate other potential trouble spots where US diplomatic reporting may be inadequate, and to find ways to improve it. The State Department also is specifically reviewing its foreign language coverage.

Ugly Americanism is not just a governmental problem. Reportedly not a single Western journalist in Tehran to cover the Iranian revolution could speak Farsi. It's common for the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and other major organizations to give their correspondents some language training before foreign assignments, but the reporters usually are far from fluent and have to depend on hired local assistants. US publications also have been cutting back their foreign services. No US newspaper now has a full-time correspondent in Eastern Europe, where an eruption against Ugly Sovietism could occur at any time. US corporations don't perform any better than the government or newspapers. According to Senator (and semanticist) S. I. Hayakawa, there are 10,000 Japanese businessmen in the United States, all of whom speak English, but only 1000 US businessmen in Japan, of whom few can utter much Japanese at all.

The fundamental cause of these problems is a failure of the American education system. One might expect that traditional American isolationism was even a deeper cause, but according to statistics compiled by S. Frederick Starr, secretary of the Smithsonian Institution's Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies, interest in foreign language study in the US peaked in 1915, when 36 percent of secondary school

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pupils were studying modern foreign languages. There was a steady decline after that, through World War II and into the cold war, to 20 percent in the late 1950s. Sputnik and the National Defense Education Act boosted that figure only up to 24 percent in 1960, and it has been backsliding ever since, down to about 15 percent now. There are four million youngsters enrolled in foreign language courses in high schools nowadays, but 90 percent of them are in either the first or second year of language study. Only five percent of US high school students graduate with more than two years of language training. Even though elementary school years are the easiest time for children to learn languages, less than one percent of America's grade school kids are given such instruction.

In 1915, 85 percent of the nation's colleges had foreign language admissions requirements, but only eight percent now do, and the number keeps dropping. So do the number of colleges offering language instruction, the number of students enrolled and the number of students being trained to be language teachers. The same is true of international relations studies. It's sometimes claimed, as an excuse, that because English has become such a world language, there's no need for Americans to learn other tongues. But that is a stupid proposition. English is a world language because Britain once was a mighty empire and because the United States emerged from World War II as economically, militarily and politically the most powerful nation on earth. The US decided it didn't want to be militarily dominant. Economically, the dollar is drooping and other countries are considering alternate world currencies. If we are not politically strong, people will use other languages, too. The only way we *can* be politically strong is to speak other people's languages.

President Carter has appointed a commission to recommend ways to improve language instruction in US schools. Starr and others have called for a system of big city international high schools, for a rewriting of the Defense Education Act and for increased funding of the Fulbright scholarship program and other international education programs.

Pending any reversal of trends in the schools, responsibility for training US diplomats will rest with the State Department. Unhappily, inquiries there suggest that foreign service officers have little incentive to learn and stick with difficult languages or area specialties. Foreign language instruction in schools and colleges is in such a bad way that the department long ago had to drop language proficiency as a prerequisite for entry into the foreign service. But it does not even give applicants a competitive advantage if they do speak another language.

Once in the service, new officers get a one-time promotion if they know foreign languages. Minimal professional proficiency (referred to as a 3/3 rating—3 for reading, 3 for speaking) in a popular "world" language, or limited working knowledge (2/2) of a "difficult" language can be worth $1000 to a young officer. Someone who enters with native-speaker proficiency (5/5) in a hard language can get up to $2500. That is about the limit of the department's incentive system.

After four years, foreign service officers are required to rate 3/3 in a world language or 2/2 in a difficult language in order to keep their jobs. This means that every officer has to pass a language test at one point in his career, but it means little else. There is no requirement for re-testing, and no benefits, either, for retaining proficiency. In fact, the system contains outright disincentives against learning new, especially hard, languages. An officer who passes a French exam once and goes on to work in posts where no language at all is required will have a strong competitive advantage over another who spends two years learning, say, Arabic or Chinese. School-time is not as good as post-time in the State Department's promotion-rating system.

Once trained, an Arabic or Chinese speaker has some choice posts available. But that is not the case with officers who learn one-country languages such as Sinhalese or Amharic. Such proficiency gives one opportunity only to serve tours in Sri Lanka and Ethiopia, to which foreign services officers and their families are likely to say no thanks. The Soviet Union, which doesn't worry about what families think, sends its diplomats back to the same country again and again, assuring itself a cadre of seasoned experts. The United States not only does not encourage such specialization, but a program instituted during the Kissinger era actually discourages it. Kissinger supposedly visited Mexico City once and was appalled that US diplomats there didn't understand SALT. So he instituted the Global Orientation Program (acronymed GLOP), requiring that foreign service officers spend a certain amount of time outside their specialty area. In practical terms, this means that a Korean language specialist may end up, say, in South Africa, where his language proficiency will lapse and the money spent to train him will be wasted.

What to do about all this? Clearly, pay and other incentives should be created to encourage officers to learn and stay proficient in languages. Tours of duty probably should be extended from two years in a post to three. New ways have to be found to employ spouses of foreign service officers abroad; increasingly, they are refusing to give up jobs and pleasant surroundings in Washington to traipse the earth. On the other hand, creating "little Americas" in underdeveloped countries, with swimming pools, bars and fancy commissaries, isolates American diplomats and creates distance between them and local people. The Carter administration, with its various review boards and commissions, has to figure out how to find, train and encourage more dedicated internationalists than the United States now

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

has. It is the only way for the US to be sensitive to what is happening in other countries. It is the only way to avoid Ugly Americanism. The country in *The Ugly American* was fictional, but American bumbling was a reality in Vietnam. And more recently, in Iran.

Morton Kondracke

The decline of the West, as seen from Russia.

Spengler in Moscow

Moscow

Monday morning the news reached the Soviet public: Chinese troops had invaded Vietnam. Tension had been high since Deng Xiaoping traveled through America denouncing Soviet "hegemonism," and now Russia's hatred of its Asian enemy rose to the surface. At Moscow State University that afternoon, Communist Youth leaders planned a demonstration in front of the nearby Chinese Embassy; that evening Moscow students assembled before the embassy in Friendship Park, chanting "Get out of Vietnam" to the skeleton staff of Chinese officials. On the radio, factory spokesmen and Vietnamese students living in Russia denounced the Chinese aggressors. At the political information billboards located in every school, library and office building, clippings from *Pravda* and *Izvestiia* were posted to present the official line: the Soviet government regards the Chinese offensive as a heinous act of aggression, and warns the Chinese to withdraw from Vietnam "before it is too late."

The anti-Chinese harangues continued for the first week of the Sino-Vietnamese war. The government did little talking on its own, preferring to let private individuals or "public organizations" (such as the mysteriously created "Soviet Committee to Defend Peace") issue the statements of condemnation. The talk was tough, but it offered no concrete suggestions of how Moscow would help Vietnam. Instead, the Soviet press continually reminded the public that the Vietnamese people could defeat the Chinese on their own, as they had frustrated French and American imperialists in the past.

By the second week the chief enemy in the eyes of the Soviet press became the United States. President Carter's speech in Georgia declaring America's neutrality in the conflict provoked the Soviet claim that the United States had known of China's intentions beforehand, and had given Deng the go-ahead during his visit to America. The Soviet public has never been informed that Vietnamese troops were responsible for the fall of Pol Pot in Cambodia (the whole affair has been depicted as an indigenous uprising by the "United Front for the Liberation of Kampuchea"). So it is easy for the government to convince people that the United States and China have entered into a conspiracy against Vietnam and, ultimately, the Soviet Union.

The idea of a Sino-American conspiracy against the Soviet Union has frightened Russians for several years. The events of the last year have seemed to confirm that nightmare. First came the Chinese treaty with Japan. Then Deng toured Europe and Britain began discussing the sale of Harrier fighters to China. Then Carter announced Washington's recognition of Peking, and finally Deng came to America. After the announcement of Sino-American normalization, *Pravda* suggested that Washington had decided to keep American troops from South Korea in order to deploy them in a joint Sino-American attack on Vladivostok.

If it comes to war, most Russians seem to believe, America does not stand a chance against the USSR without an alliance with China.

Many Americans were surprised by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's pronouncements on Western decline at Harvard last June. But Americans living in Moscow have been hearing the same message from Russians for the last year: the West is enjoying its last moments of decadence before its collapse, the American empire is receding and the Soviet empire will soon spread to all corners of the globe.

This widely held view of ordinary Russians is not just the result of state propaganda to the effect that capitalism will collapse as a result of its growing contradictions. In fact Marxist thinking has little to do with these predictions of American decline. Quite the contrary, these views are held by Russians who are aware of the cynical workings of their political system. When Khrushchev declared "We will bury you," what he had in mind was Marx's historical concept of youthful socialism outliving obsolescent capitalism. When ordinary Russians today warn that the Politburo will bury us, what they mean is that the Soviet military power will crush the now flabby American military. America's defeat in Vietnam shocked the Soviet public, and the subsequent victories for the Kremlin in Africa and Asia have reinforced the Russians' image of the impending destruction of the West.

This opinion has been expressed to me by average, undistinguished Russians whose thoughts carry little weight in America. But recently I heard the same idea uttered by a man whose views are respected in the West. Roy Medvedev is well known in the United States as a Soviet historian and intellectual. He is a Marxist dissident inside the Soviet Union who criticizes Stalinist Russia from a leftist perspective. Although he agrees with Solzhenitsyn in his condemnations of Stalin's terror, Medvedev represents the other current

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in contemporary Soviet dissident thinking, a current that opposes Solzhenitsyn's anti-rationalism and anti-Marxism. Despite their differences, however, Medvedev shares Solzhenitsyn's assessment of America's future.

I met with Medvedev in February, when Deng was touring the United States. Medvedev said the Soviet Union "is moving in one direction—toward the strengthening of our military might. By the end of the century Russia will be the strongest country on earth, there is no denying that. Of course our country has many problems—we're poor, we dress badly and eat badly. But in the key sectors of the economy we are growing and growing, and the United States cannot stop us. We are going to overtake the United States, and that is inevitable."

Medvedev's explanation was depressing: "Our country is a military machine. We are continuing now as we did in World War II—we were poor then, we starved and froze in miserable apartments, but we beat the Germans. The Germans lost nine million and we lost 20 million, but we won the war. We won because our system allowed the spending of colossal resources for one purpose alone—military strength. We may be primitive, but we will take over."

Medvedev pointed out (rightly, I believe) a fundamental error in American thinking on the Soviet Union. "Americans are fools. They come to Russia, stay in our hotels, eat in the restaurants and find out that everything here is badly run. Then they return to the United States with the conclusion that since Russia can't run a hotel, it can't build a rocket either. They don't realize that we put everything into rocketry, that the government does not care whether or not anything is left over for the population."

Finally he articulated an understanding of America's chief weakness which I have heard frequently from Russians: "Americans cannot keep up with this kind of a system. In the United States everything is based on private interest, and it is impossible to get anything accomplished there. People talk about Soviet bureaucratism, but it's really America that is plagued by this problem. If the Pentagon wants to build a new fighter or bomber, it has to pay Lockheed twice as much as the plane costs in order to get private industry to do the job for the government. . . . Americans care too much about their standard of living to build an army to match ours. Everything is ruled by private interests. There's no unified command. Nixon couldn't beat tiny Vietnam because the country was too divided to win a war. We sent a few thousand troops down to Angola and we took over the place in just a few weeks."

It is frightening to be an American in Moscow these days. When I departed for the Soviet Union it was fashionable in America to think that the domino theory was dead. It was common to think that the Soviet Union was ruled by responsible, conservative officeholders who would not risk their privileges with an expansionist foreign policy. It seemed at that time absurd to think in terms of the old bipolar world. It seemed that more complex world divisions of North versus South and industrial versus developing regions had rendered the old concepts of the cold war obsolete. But Russians have taught me that such notions as East versus West, however much the West may wish them to disappear, are still thriving in the East.

The mood within the Soviet Union is clearly one of war. Medvedev's statements are unusual only because they were articulated by a distinguished intellectual. I have heard many other Russians express the same view—workers, students, photographers, Young Communist members and reserve officers in the army. The frightening thing to realize is that Russians perceive a weakness in America, because this perception of weakness is what promises international instability in the years to come. Washington's recognition of Peking was greeted by Americans in Moscow as a brilliant coup. From our point of view, only the fear of a Sino-American conspiracy can sober the Kremlin into restraining itself. At the time of this writing, China has been at war with Vietnam for two weeks; Russia has not attacked China, and I think we have this perception of a conspiracy to thank.

A few days ago I spoke with a Russian friend who had served in the Soviet army. He now directs the political information discussions in his local Communist Youth organization. I asked him how the Chinese attack was treated in his Komsomol meetings. He told me that, according to the official line he explained to his comrades, the Soviet Union would offer material aid to Vietnam but that Vietnam would have to fight China on her own. The Sino-American alliance prevents more direct action, he said. Then he told me how certain he was that in the next decade his country would be at war with either China or America. We should go to war sooner rather than later, he said, for if we wait another 10 years China may acquire the technology to beat Russia.

My friend was dressed in jeans. We had just discussed American rock music, and he had been telling me how much he loved Stevie Wonder. Then the subject turned to war, and he mentioned the tendency he sees for Soviet expansion and American defeat. "It's a shame to think that your country will be destroyed," he told me. "Just imagine, everything your country has done for us, all that your people have labored for us. Sometimes it occurs to me that the United States is the only country left in the world that defends our rights—the Jews, the writers and everyone else. Without America this country would really be a prison. Such a shame."

Robert Herr

Robert Herr is a pseudonym for an American living in Moscow.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Relations with Mexico are no longer a matter of foreign policy.

The Phantom Border

A 10-year-old girl from Juarez, Mexico, was the first casualty in the diplomatic but sometimes violent border war breaking out between the United States and Mexico. An angry crowd of Mexican demonstrators surged onto the Rio Grande bridges between Juarez and El Paso on March 10, protesting a new wave of local arrests of illegal aliens. The child reportedly was killed when a car tried to run through the gathering. In a larger sense, though, she is a victim of US policy that views Mexico through an oil-stained prism.

The flash point of the early March riot was the capture and return to Mexico of 150 illegal immigrants, and revocation of fraudulent border-crossing cards from 11 more. In the general policy limbo and uneasy truce along the boundary, Immigration and Naturalization police usually avoid such provocative "dumping" of aliens. An INS spokesman said these latest El Paso deportations were a case of "bad timing" rather than a sign of a deliberate crackdown by Washington or even by the notoriously independent INS bureaucracy in Texas. But they demonstrate at the least that US border strategy is in disarray. Lately it has swerved from construction of a "tortilla curtain," using anti-personnel sensors developed in the Vietnam war, to the opposite extreme of a proposed free entry for half a million immigrants as part of the purchase price for Mexico's coveted new oil. On the Mexican side, of course, the riot represents the frustrations of a crowded, still grindingly poor people so near yet so far from apparent deliverance across the US frontier. The only way to avoid more bloody clashes is a fresh, coherent Mexican policy in Washington. But this seems further than ever from realization.

President Carter's visit to Mexico in February was supposed to be the start of such a fresh policy. Despite President Lopez-Portillo's acid welcoming toast about habitual US "disdain" toward Mexico and the too obvious oil greed of the visiting gringos, despite Carter's own blundering rejoinder about tourist diarrhea, White House officials returned to Washington proclaiming the success of the mission. There would be a steady flow of Mexican oil in return for liberal, if not open, immigration practices, according to private briefings and leaks. A special emissary, Governor Reuben Askew of Florida, was dispatched merely to clean up the details. But now that the administration has moved on to other pressing matters, several officials recall the presidential trip very differently. By their version, Carter was furious on the return flight of Air Force One and all too aware of the publicity debacle of the toasts. Both political and State Department aides had to dissuade him from making "a retaliatory strike" by an impulsive public statement or policy order back in Washington. In the secret talks between the two presidents as well as at lower levels, the Mexicans were "unflinching and unforthcoming" in a style not appreciably milder than Lopez-Portillo's public rebuke. The White House planned before the trip to use great fanfare in announcing Askew's appointment as presidential coordinator for relations with Mexico. But the announcement was muted in the end. And as officials later prepared briefings for Askew, neither oil nor natural gas nor immigrants were about to flow.

Carter received a "Presidential Review Memorandum (PRM) on Mexico, representing the hashed-out consensus of his subordinates, late last year. The PRM is said to have explained that continued, even expanded, immigration into the US is an important economic and political safety valve for Mexican governments. It reportedly predicted that Lopez-Portillo would make a looser immigration policy an important condition of any oil or natural gas deal. This was particularly likely, the paper argued, because of "growing US Congressional discussion about 'sealing' the border" however "impractical or repugnant the act might prove." The memorandum suggested using the immigration issue as a US "bargaining counter" with the Mexicans. According to a State Department source, Carter was told he could choose to deal with Mexico "like any other country," or in a "special relationship" which, in effect, accepted immigration as the *quid pro quo* for US access to Mexican petroleum. "He checked the 'special relationship' box before he went to Mexico City. The problem is, policy is still proceeding from the other box."

American officials fascinated by Mexico's vaunted 200-billion-barrel oil reserve have tended to ignore other relevant numbers. Mexico suffers 17 percent unemployment and an inflation rate of almost 40 percent. The oil boom and what is done with it will comprise the most momentous economic and social development since the Mexican Revolution. The ruling elite's handling of the oil patrimony—chiefly the fending off of yankee exploitation or bargain-hunting—fortifies the national mythology of the revolution just when this ideological cement is most needed to maintain power. Lopez-Portillo's cautious pace and caustic tone on oil derive from domestic politics, not hubris or hate. No US diplomacy can change this attitude, and no informed president need take it as an insult or a sign of real intrasigence.

Lower-level State Department aides have argued that US policy might respond to this volatile political chemistry by a renewed policy of development cooperation, technical assistance and other aid to help deal with the country's vast residue of urban and rural poverty. Mexico reportedly loses a million acres a year because of poor or non-existent conservation measures, and its cities from Juarez to Vera Cruz are

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

increasingly polluted. Having proudly spurned US aid programs of the 1960s as patronizing and irrelevent, the Mexicans—including Lopez-Portillo himself—recently have all but invited a renewed US aid program.

But even that opening has been clogged by a new foreign aid orthodoxy of the Carter administration, which has been to exclude from a spare aid budget so-called "middle-income" countries such as Mexico, where per capita income is $200 a year. Held dear by the Brzezinski NSC staff against the inevitable bureaucratic claimants and special interests, the "middle income" concept apparently began as a laudable antidote to vested aid programs in prospering clients, and to the Kissinger-Nixon neglect of the poorest developing nations, particularly in Africa. But after two years, the concept seems to have acquired (as such bureaucratic devices tend to) its own vested programs and office interests, with little room for flexibility. The middle-income strictures have cut especially hard in Latin America. There, per capita income figures and surface modernization disguise the fact that half the population is left behind in a root poverty that officials worry will sooner or later destroy the modest programs along with the statistical facade produced by past aid.

President Carter invites major domestic opposition with his muddled Mexican policy. Most immediately on the immigration issue, and perhaps soon on the broader question of Mexican development, the administration must face the emerging, already formidable force of 16 million Hispanics, whose pivotal votes in the Southwest are subject to piracy by Jerry Brown in an early Texas primary. Neither the Hispanic nor Anglo constituency of the region will reward a simple policy of drift or concession. On the eve of Carter's Mexico City trip, the White House was being lobbied in strength for the first time, not only by farmworker organizations fearful of some vast infusion of Mexican rural labor as part of an oil swap, but also by powerful urban unions worried about a similar influx in the services and lesser skilled trades. The labor groups were reacting to widespread reports that Carter intended to offer Lopez-Portillo a plan of legal, if temporary, immigration of 500,000 Mexican workers over the next five years in return for a generous portion of Mexico's oil production.

In truth, no agreement between Washington and Mexico City can control migration across the border. As many as four million Mexican aliens already are in the US; new immigrants are easily absorbed into local economies. Shutting the border is a chimera and any attempt at repatriation would be a nightmare.

The old border already has been obliterated by millions of dollars and pesos in small family remittances, huge investments and interlocking markets, personal and political relations. Washington's diplomacy toward Mexican poverty and despair thus becomes policy toward Texas, Colorado, California; Mexico City's husbanding of its own riches and energetic export of its own poor becomes policy not only toward the border states, but also, at the gas pump, toward the rest of the US. But thus far, governed by crude nativist impulse or bureaucratic cant and habit, there appears to be little recognition of that reality in either Washington or Mexico City.

Roger Morris

Communists and international bankers: the conspiracy explained.

Dollars for Detente

by William J. Quirk

Detente has been a tremendous success for the Russians. The main purpose of the exercise, from their point of view, has been imports from the West. The Soviet Union's primitive plant and equipment was to be replaced with sophisticated Western machinery. A new Five Year Plan was announced based on increased production due to capitalistic imports. The Russians intended nothing less than a giant siphon of Western technology. A modern Communist industrial state could finally be achieved. Western businessmen could not conceal their eagerness to cooperate, and thereby exploit what they considered an untapped market. As a result of this mutual enthusiasm, in 1978 $28 billion of

William J. Quirk is professor of law at the University of South Carolina.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

machinery poured into Communist countries from what used to be called the free world.

There was one problem when all this began in the early 1970s: the Soviets didn't have any money. General Motors was eager to plunge into the market and sell as many trucks as it could. But GM wanted its cash. Enter the international banks to provide the Communist nations with cash to pay GM. The banks take back IOUs. The loans have been at favorable interest rates for five to seven years. In 1980 the first of the large loans will become due. It is likely that the debtors will default, busting the banks and bringing in the government to prevent a worldwide depression. The bank losses will be distributed to the American taxpayer. It will be another example of mixed capitalism—socialism where profits, if any, remain private and losses, if any, go public. The "net net" (a fashionable business term, there) is a transfer payment from the taxpayer to General Motors with the Soviets getting the truck. How did all this come about? In retrospect it will seem simple and predictable.

The facts are not easy to come by. Both the Russians and the international bankers, for very different reasons, have a passion for secrecy. Enough is known, however, to make the dimensions of the pending disaster seem clear.

In 1974, Congress enacted the Jackson Amendment denying any official governmental credit until the Russians made some showing of good faith on human rights. Nonetheless, the flow of goods to Comecon countries accelerated. By the end of 1978 the Communist nations had borrowed $55 billion from the West. This was divided among the Soviet Union, Poland, East Germany, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Romania. The debt has been ballooning in recent years—it's up by almost a third in the past two years.

The debt arises simply because the Communist countries have been importing far more goods than they have been exporting. Their trade deficit for the last four years has run, 1975: $10 billion; 1976: $5.9 billion; 1977: $5.9 billion and 1978: $8.5 billion. There is no doubt that the deficits will continue in this range. And, consequently, so will the need to borrow more dollars. The 1977 International Economic Report of the President warned, "It is evident that continuing expansion of debt cannot indefinitely finance a continuous increase in Communist country imports from the West."

(American trade deficits, as it happens, have been ever larger than the Russians' in recent years. But we are fortunate to print a currency that foreigners are willing to accept in payment for their goods, and to hold in their own treasuries for future use—in essence, a free loan. The Russians have no such advantage; they must get their foreign currency first, then spend it.)

The West has been surprisingly eager to finance the modernization of the Communist means of production. About 62 percent of the Eastern European debt, about $34 billion, is owed to those exemplars of the capitalist system, private international bankers. *Institutional Investor* reported in the summer of 1976, "Western bankers . . . in some cases seem to be tripping over each other in the rush to provide money—at rates and conditions highly favorable to the borrowers. . . . [T]here remains a distinct atmosphere of euphoria surrounding the business of lending to the Communists." Official loans from Western governments amount to about 30 percent of the total Communist debt, and credit extended by those who are selling their wares accounts for only eight percent. The manufacturers have, for the most part, let the bankers take the burden of extending the credit and risking nonpayment. The bankers have freely put the burden on their depositors.

But the bankers insist that the risk of nonpayment is not great. They say they have never lost a penny on these loans. They feel safe in treating the Soviets as a triple-A credit risk. This is curious since the Russians refuse, on security grounds, to supply any facts and figures on their financial situation. In their view that is the CIA's job. They are not impressed by the fact that the Helsinki Agreement, "Basket Two," calls for the free flow of commercial and economic data. Only last month the bankers were pitifully grateful when near-bankrupt Poland agreed to give them a few facts in return for a new $500-million loan. Actually, upon examination, the disclosed data didn't look too complete, or fresh. Nevertheless, one banker said, it had great "symbolic value." Of course, an additional problem is that Western analysts lack expertise in evaluating creditworthiness of centrally planned economies.

The point is that the loans have been made on faith and not on facts. And faith in what? Russian honor? The bankers cite great natural resources and a good recent repayment record. A good recent record, of course, is easily explained as the necessary bait to draw the capitalist rabbit into a credit trap. The real problem is not the ability to repay but the *willingness* to repay. This is different from the case of the underdeveloped countries, which could not repay all the billions they owe the international banks, even if they wanted to do so ("The Bankers' Dilemma," *TNR*, January 27). The touchy thing about the loans to the eastern bloc is the *desirability*—from the Russian point of view—of

Coming:

Henry Fairlie in Outer Space.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

repayment. That is purely a question of Soviet policy. If it seems wise to repay, they will do so. But if the Russians think the time is right, they will default and the Soviet IOUs will go the way of Imperial Russian Bonds. Can the West sustain a $55-billion default? Can the banks sustain a $34-billion default? Will the Western governments instigate a military crisis over this to get the Russians to pay up, or will they find a less dangerous solution?

A taxpayer bail-out is inevitable. The Lockheed-New York City scenario will be followed. David Rockefeller will argue that the US government encouraged these loans in the name of detente, and it cannot stand aside now that they have gone sour. In addition, it will be said that Chase, and the other international banks, just cannot absorb losses of these dimensions. They will collapse and, in the process, bring on a worldwide depression. The form of the bail-out may be indirect—for example, government may make direct loans to Poland so that it can pay off the New York banks. But there is no doubt it will be done. It is also possible that Congress—to prevent a depression—would feel obliged to bail out endangered European banks. The coming bail-out was clearly seen by Zbigniew Brzezinski as long ago as the summer of 1976 when he wrote, "The US government will be called upon to negotiate, to guarantee, and, to some extent, to protect the various arrangements that have been contrived even by private business."

Last May former secretary of state Henry Kissinger traveled to Mexico City to address the opening of the International Monetary Conference. With the press barred, Kissinger, after an introduction by David Rockefeller, told 100 top bankers that Western credit was an unused instrument of foreign policy in dealing with the Soviet bloc. Our credit could perhaps be a lever to pry some worthwhile concessions out of the Communists. He suggested closer ties between the financial policies of businessmen and bankers and the political policies of government. Not that the banks should be subservient to governmental policy, but a little cooperation would be helpful. The bankers were unimpressed. One said, "Bankers tend to look at things from a free enterprise point of view." A British banker, Anthony Savil Tuke, said "we wouldn't favor direction by our government on these lines." Kissinger, apparently stung by this reception, later called a news conference. It would be, he spoke bluntly, "absurd for the industrial democracies to supply the wherewithal for a policy ultimately aimed at undermining them."

But perhaps the bankers knew something that Kissinger didn't. Underlying his position was the idea that the lender had power over the borrower. The bankers knew the situation is often reversed. A great debtor, by threatening default, can destroy a creditor. The banks may have known they were already the captives of the Soviets. According to the *Financial Times* of London, the "banks have long since passed the point at which they could have cut their losses" and are "likely to make every effort to continue to lend in order to protect the loans they have previously made."

Banking laws are designed to prevent such role reversal. For example, according to the National Bank Act, an American bank cannot lend more than 10 percent of its capital to any one debtor. But laws are one thing and enforcement another. The regulated banks seem thoroughly to control the regulators. The comptroller of the currency is allowed to define what is a debtor. Poland, in early 1978, was at the 10 percent limit. Up to this point, all Polish borrowing had been through a single public entity, the Bank Handlowy. The comptroller ruled that a $250-million loan made directly to the Polish copper industry could be considered as being made to a separate borrower. Chase and Citibank, as lead banks, went ahead with the loan. By early 1979 Poland was well into a New York City cycle. It needed a quick $500 million. For what purpose? Why, to pay the interest on earlier borrowing. New borrowing to repay earlier borrowing is a terminal symptom. But it looks as if major American banks will pick up the loan. These banks include Bank of America, Bankers Trust, Citibank, Chemical Bank, Manufacturers Hanover, First National Bank of Chicago and Security Pacific National Bank.

With considerable understatement, Chase economist Donald W. Green said of Poland that the "picture is still uncertain." There is little doubt that Poland will have to default or, as the bankers more euphemistically put it, "reschedule," around 1980. Then why the new loan? The bankers also talk of "monitoring" the Polish economy, balanced budgets, "belt-tightening" and reduced military expenditures. They seem to think they can treat Poland like the IMF treats Peru. This is implausible. Soviet response to cuts in military spending is predictable. "Belt-tightening" means Western bankers get repaid while domestic consumers get short shrift. Polish devotion to this ideal must be called uncertain.

The bankers were really relying on an article of faith—the "moral obligation" theory. This is the belief that in the last analysis the Soviet Union will recognize a "moral obligation" to bail out its satellites. The

Coming Next Week

Human Rights:
Carter's Score at Half-Time.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Russians will not wish, so the theory goes, the image problems cause by a bankrupt Poland. It is true that the Russians helped Hungary and Poland in 1956 and Poland again in 1971 with a $100-million loan. But the problem now is of a different scale: Poland owes $15 billion long-term and almost two billion dollars short-term. Annual interest alone runs well over one billion dollars. American Bankers may find their reliance on Russian "moral obligation" has been misplaced. It seems more likely that the Soviets are using Poland as a corporate shell, buying all the Western goods they can, fully intending to default on the loans. Repossessing the goods is impractical, to say the least.

The Russian example of securing Western machinery for worthless loans has been so enticing that the Chinese are now trying to get their fair share. They also have plenty of "moral obligations" to give. Deputy Prime Minister Deng Xiaoping, on his recent shopping tour of the United States, accomplished far more than he could have expected. He wandered through our heavy capital goods market like an entranced teenager in Bloomingdale's. Had there ever been such grand things? The fact that Mr. Deng has no money is just another challenge to be overcome. According to the CIA, China, a country of almost a billion people, has an annual per capita income of $343. The major American banks nevertheless already have set up shop in Peking. The same games will be played. The Chinese will get the goods they want, the manufacturers and exporters will prosper, the bankers will show some profits for a while, and the taxpayers will bear the ultimate loss.

Of course, with the Chinese invited in, the game becomes more complex. Bankrolling two deadly enemies, while it may be exhilarating, seems certain to end in disaster. I predict the Soviets will exert the leverage of threatened default upon us, and that the Chinese will be unable to compete with a $55-billion debt. Consequently, despite our public protestation of even-handedness, US policy will follow the bank loans and favor the USSR.

An inquiry into a procedure "hedged about with insanity."

Why Write?

by Paul Robinson

I won't address the paradox of writing an essay that raises doubts about writing. Suffice it to say that I think the question interesting—interesting, obviously, to those who write; interesting also, probably, to those who are considering writing, and perhaps even to those who don't write themselves but find writers compellingly mysterious. I should add that I am thinking primarily of nonfiction writing, though much of what I say is relevant to fiction as well.

For most of us, writing takes a long time; normally we devote several years to a book. And although a writer does other things as well, he typically spends thousands of hours before delivering his work to the publisher, and even then his labors aren't over. Because it ordinarily takes so long, we are astonished, even angered, to learn of a book that has been written in a matter of days. Marshall Kilduff's book on the Guyana massacre, *The Suicide Cult*, apparently was completed in 96 hours and published in less than two weeks. The book was actually the joint effort of a newspaper staff (that of the *San Francisco Chronicle*), but even so it entirely contradicts our notion of how much time must be invested before one has a real book.

Indeed the question, "Why write?" arises precisely because we sense a discrepancy between the amount of labor we put into a piece of writing and the knowledge, edification and entertainment that readers extract from it. I have speculated that if one could calculate all the hours spent by all readers in reading a book, they often would add up to fewer than the hours spent by the author in writing it. I hardly need say that I'm thinking not of the Shakespeares and Arthur Haleys of this world, but of the rest of us scribblers.

For purposes of analysis: "Why write?" can be divided into two subquestions: What are the motives for writing? And who is the audience? The most likely answers to those questions all seem inadequate.

One writes to make money. Some writers—mostly of fiction and textbooks—do of course make money, and a larger number write, at least in part, in the hope of making money. But most authors know that there's no money in writing, and those who don't know find out soon enough. By "no money" I intend a comparative judgment: ridiculously little money against what one

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

can earn as a doctor, dentist, lawyer, businessman or even a schoolteacher. These are the relevant comparisons, because writers, on the whole, are intelligent and industrious people who, aside from a temperamental disinclination, doubtless would succeed well enough in the high-paying professions. I sometimes have imagined trying to calculate my hourly income as a writer. If I counted only royalties it would be embarrasingly low, probably less than 50 cents, and even if I counted half my salary as a professor (under the assumption that Stanford is paying me to write as well as teach) it might at best approach the government's minimum wage. If one considers the matter statistically, then, only fools write for money.

One writes to get tenure. This, in a sense, is an academic variation on the above. It's true, obviously, but much less so than most students are inclined to believe. One's motives may change as one grows older, but I've noticed that an inordinately large percentage of scholars keep writing after they've gotten tenure. Are they stupid? There is a marginal economic incentive in that one's salary tends to reflect one's productivity, but the differences are far too small to justify the time and energy senior scholars put into their writing.

One writes to gain a reputation. There's more to this, but it's a deceptive matter, and highly subjective. Reputation is closely tied to the question of readership. I do not doubt that most writers desire esteem, but I think that they often delude themselves as to who's listening, as I will try to show in a moment.

One writes to tell the truth. This is the most attractive, because the most disinterested, motive, but it has suffered irremediable damage in the 20th century. In nearly all fields of inquiry, from the natural sciences to the humanities, the notion of truth has been under assault, and along with it the old cumulative model of intellectual enterprise—the "march of scholarship." Max Weber, Thomas Kuhn and many others have persuaded us, in varying degrees, that intellectual life consists not in replacing false ideas with true ones, but in replacing impracticable ideas with useful ones. Naturally we still have to tell the truth, but I don't sense that authors write primarily to dispel error. The search for truth is by no means a negligible concern, but it doesn't hold the power it once did.

One writes for an audience, but in terms of one's commitment to writing, actual readership is less important than imagined readership. Moreover it's not enough just to know who reads. We also want to know how they read—in what spirit and with what degree of comprehension. If these qualitative considerations are borne in mind, it can be argued that many writers labor under a false conception of their audience. Who is listening, then?

Friends and family are listening. It would be more accurate to say that they are trying to listen. I doubt I am unusual in finding that most of what I write makes very little sense to my friends and family. I dedicated my last book to my mother, an intelligent and well-educated woman, and she made an heroic effort to get through it. I received weekly letters with lists of words that were unfamiliar to her. (How often, in the course of normal literate conversation, does one say "empirical"?) As I recall, she finally gave up somewhere around page 70.

Most authors already acknowledge this sad truth in the way they approach the question, posed by a non-scholar, "What are you writing about?" For example, I am at work on a study of Giuseppe Verdi and European intellectual history, and my answer to the question invariably consists of a series of dodges. If I say I'm writing about Verdi *tout court*, my interrogator takes that to mean I'm writing a biography. If I say I'm writing about Verdi and history, it is assumed that I'm writing about the historical circumstances under which Verdi's operas were first staged, or perhaps about the historical content of Verdi's operas. "Intellectual history" is a bottomless pit; the phrase, I've found, means virtually nothing to most people. (Nor is there any reason it should mean anything.) Moreover, even if I can convey what I mean by intellectual history, the task of explaining how that might relate to a group of 19th-century Italian operas still stretches before me like the labor of Sisyphus. In short, I'm always relieved when my friends don't ask, though not at all because I consider my enterprise trivial.

Reviewers are listening. Yes, but only in order to write reviews. Anyone who has reviewed a book knows the exploitative frame of mind in which one approaches the task: one's primary goal is not to learn, but to figure out what one is going to say.

Students of the subject are listening. Yes, but only some, and, like reviewers, they tend to listen exploitatively. Too much is written for us to read more than a small fraction of the publications relevant to our work, and we read largely in the spirit of "getting through." Books, even those of our friends, are hurdles. We dash over them, maybe picking up a few items that we can put to good use, and we are relieved to have them behind us. It strikes me as quite mad to think that one should spend so many years writing a book just to create the occasion for these little flurries of intellectual anxiety. Contemplating such an insane ritual, a rational person must conclude that most books are written to be written, not to be read.

There are exceptions, needless to say. Not just the writing of the great, the "immortals," but some "ordinary" books are so well conceived, so beautifully executed, that one reads them in the same spirit in which, presumably, they were written. In my own recent reading, Donald Howard's book *The Idea of the Canterbury Tales* falls into this category. I mention it in particular because it contains a discussion of the beginning of reading and of books (what Howard calls "bookness") that throws striking light on our present dilemma.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The inescapable point, however, is that such books are, as noted, exceptional. If one needs evidence, I recommend a casual tour through the stacks of a major library. Pick any book off the shelf, and the chances are you will hold in your hand a piece of scholarship that hasn't been consulted in years, though it may have won its author tenure at some university or, even more daunting, "crowned" a distinguished career. And there it sits, as dead as a medieval chronicle. Its only hope for survival is in the transformed guise of a primary source for some younger scholars writing a history of the discipline. But even as the species cannibalizes itself, the chances of any given tome are slim. At such moments as these, one recognizes that writing is hedged about with insanity.

Yet we continue to write, and few of us are carted off to the loony bin. I have been able to think of only one explanation for this mystery, and that is that we write largely for ourselves. The proposition would sound more plausible if I had confined my remarks to fiction, since it is generally conceded that poets, novelists and playwrights are engaged, at least partially, in acts of self-exploitation and self-definition. But I believe the same is unconsciously true of writers of nonfiction, and that their writing would gain in clarity and force if the motive were raised to the conscious level. At the very least it might inhibit the attacks of purposelessness to which writers are peculiarly subject.

The best evidence that we write for ourselves is the fact that we are our own best audience. No one reads what we write with the attentiveness or affection that we ourselves bring to it. The author is the only reader who reads in a non-exploitative fashion. And the author is the only reader who recognizes the intellectual triumphs contained in certain perfectly unassuming phrases that took hours to bludgeon into shape. I suspect that if Shakespeare were to return to life and could find time to read all the criticism on just one of his plays, he would at first marvel at the many things literary critics have detected that he himself didn't know were there: but he also would have cause to complain that some particular felicity of expression, some ambiguity or some inner rhyme, has gone unappreciated.

Likewise, the author usually knows best where slippage has occurred in his argument, thus making him not only the most appreciative but in certain respects also the most critical reader of his own work. Viewed from this perspective, writing is an act of self-clarification, in which we bring order to those ideas and sentiments that otherwise would remain muddled and inarticulate.

Above all, the writer reads his own work with greater pleasure than almost any other reader. The late John Wasserman, who was among the most entertaining writers I know, understood this perfectly. He was famous for laughing out loud as he read his own columns and articles, and he loved to draw his colleagues' attention to particularly wicked turns of phrase he had hit upon. In brief, he had very sensibly embraced the narcissistic logic that protects writers from madness.

Only when the writer acknowledges that he writes for himself does he transcend the more petty forms of narcissism that plague writers: the desire for money, advancement, esteem. Ironically, the self stripped of its lesser vanities is also the most selfless point of reference for a writer: it becomes an instance of humanity. I recognize that I have entered murky waters here, but I believe it is psychologically correct to say that the writer who feels he is writing for himself also feels he is writing for mankind, and that the conviction is not tied to the question of whether or not he will be read. In exploring and clarifying one's own thinking, one has the sense that the mind of the species is also clarified. The proposition may sound implausible on first hearing, but its plausibility should be tested against that of the other motivations I've considered here, which, it seems to me, are far less convincing.

I have thought of a final reason why we write, one that relates to the universalizing implications of writing for oneself. Sometimes we write to say thank you, to render gratitude to a member or a portion of humanity that has given us pleasure, elevated us and made us think better of ourselves. Such is the motivation we sense and find so moving in the opening sentence of Fernand Braudel's great study of the Mediterranean world in the 16th century: "I have loved the Mediterranean with passion. . . ." I discovered a similar motive in myself as I began my study of Verdi. Part of the energy for the project, I found, came from the wish to reciprocate. I have spent thousands of hours listening to Verdi. Indeed, measured in purely quantitative terms, no other human being has given me more pleasure. A writer is in the fortunate position of being able to acknowledge such a gift in a more fully satisfying fashion than those who don't write.

This last motive, I believe, also is relatively independent of the possibility of finding an audience. Writing in this sense is a form of private correspondence, and its gratifications are exactly those derived from writing a friend. Only here the friend—or, more precisely, the benefactor—serves as a singular yardstick for the writer: because you and he are both members of the same species you are able to identify with him, but because he is one of its extraordinary examples, he reveals your limitations, the distance between yourself and what it is possible for a man to achieve.

There are other reasons for writing, not least among them a sheer love of the language and its proper use, a motive stressed by George Orwell in his essay, "Why I Write." But at the heart of the enterprise, I'm persuaded, lies the enormously gratifying dialectic of self, other and humanity.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Arts and Lives

Stanley Kauffmann on films

Filming Filming

In 1973 PBS broadcast *An American Family*, a documentary series made by tracking around after a middle-class family for a year or so. There was some sociological hullabaloo about it, not surprising since sociologists can see significance in the devising of a new ice-cream flavor. This time the fuss went further: a lot of serious people, including Margaret Mead and some respectable critics of the arts, hailed it as a new art form, an event of epoch-marking significance.

Life, like the sea at the end of *Moby Dick*, rolled on. The "new form" was in fact not new. (Just one antecedent—Alan King's film *A Married Couple*.) The residual sociological profit from it is, so far as I know, still to be shown. The whole incident was just one more instance of an aspect of western life that has been growing for about four centuries and that has been commented on by many, nowhere better than in Lionel Trilling's *Sincerity and Authenticity*: the increase in consciousness of self, the ability/compulsion to see one's self performing one's life. This phenomenon existed long before the invention of film or TV cameras, which did not create it but only reified it in another form.

Albert Brooks, who makes spoof documentaries for the NBC show *Saturday Night Live*, has now responded to this phenomenon with double wit, a double-spoof documentary called, nicely, *Real Life* (Paramount). The script, by Brooks, Monica Johnson and Harry Shearer, pulls back from the subjects of the "documentary" to show us the director and cameramen of the "documentary," so we get a multi-tiered result: actors playing real people being photographed by a crew played by actors who are all being photographed by an invisible real crew. The weakest part of the film is its finale. Maybe the script could have pulled back one more tier to show us the crew that was shooting *Real Life*, thus leaving us *thoroughly* dizzy.

Brooks's satire has four prime targets: the sententiously self-promoting scientists behind the project; the show-biz opportunism of the filmmaker; the aw-shucks opportunism of the paterfamilias; and, fundamentally, the very idea of documentary film as a vessel of unmediated truth—of, say, purer truth than fiction. (We've all seen wonderful documentaries, but, as with any other kind of film, the better the art, the better the documentary.)

Brooks, who plays the director and uses his own name and persona, is a perfect exponent of almost all the tiers. He is co-author and director of this satire in which the director on screen has eyes that keep darting as he ladles syrup. Much of the film is tolerable-funny—that is, it doesn't actually make us laugh, but it's not tedious. Some of it is laugh-funny. The family consists of a veterinarian, wife and two children in Phoenix, Arizona. It's funny that at the start the wife (Frances Lee McCain, with a nice fading-rose quality) gets a crush on the director of the "documentary." It's funny that the veterinarian (Charles Grodin, with tacit egocentricity), performing an operation on a horse, is so upset with stage fright by the presence of the camera that he overdoes the anesthetic and loses the patient.

Only the ending is "fiction," seemingly cooked up in desperation and tacked on to a "real" film.

Robert Altman is not only intracinematically navel-scratching in himself, he is apparently the cause of it in others. Look at two new films. *Remember My Name* (Lagoon) was written and directed by Alan Rudolph, a former assistant to Altman, who produced this picture by his disciple. *Old Boyfriends* (Avco Embassy) was directed by Joan Tewkesbury, who wrote *Nashville* for Altman. (*Boyfriends* was written by Paul "Hardcore" Schrader and his brother Leonard.)

These films have two big resemblances to each other. The first resemblance has several parts. Part One: the shapes of their plots. In *Name* a woman gets out of prison after a 12-year term, looks up her ex-husband, intervenes in his present love affair, and, by a series of neurotic aggressions, gets him back. In *Boyfriends* an equally neurotic woman, having split with her husband, decides to look up past lovers, then reunites with one of them. (The Schrader script also has a suggestion of Duvivier's *Carnet de Bal*, made in 1937, in which a woman digs out a 20-year-old dance card and goes to see what happened to the men who signed the card.)

Part Two of the first resemblance: Geraldine Chaplin of *Name* and Talia Shire of *Boyfriends* have some reminders of each other. Both are slight and spidery, both are negligible actresses. Chaplin has more self-assurance, but she is sadly limited—in talent and fundamental appeal. Shire is simply pathetic. She was ridiculously praised for her appearances in *The Godfather* and *Rocky* and has now floated upward. In *Boyfriends* we feel as if the script girl had been shoved in front of the camera because the star finked out and the

Films Worth Seeing

Autumn Sonata. Ingmar Bergman directs Ingrid Bergman and Liv Ullmann. A film unchallenged in quality since it came out last year.

California Suite and *Comes a Horseman*. Chiefly to savor Jane Fonda's performances. So if you see one, try to see the other.

The Deer Hunter. Robert De Niro, Christopher Walken, and Meryl Streep in a serious, if flawed, work about male rituals in Pennsylvania and Vietnam.

Norma Rae. Labor organizing in Alabama, 1978. Very moving, even though we know more about the problems than the film does. Sally Field triumphs in the title role.

SK

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

shooting schedule had to be kept. She's so bad that we begin to feel protective of her, as if a helpless person were being mocked with attention.

Part Three of the first resemblance: substantial portions of both pictures were shot in Los Angeles. Part Four: The leading male roles in both films are written to suggest recently discharged analysands, and both the actors—Anthony Perkins and Richard Jordan—have for me a scent of the analyst's office. In fact, there's no point in saying which man is in which picture: they could have interchanged roles or even alternated scenes.

Then there's a second large resemblance between these films, much more noteworthy than the films themselves. They represent a kind of thinking about film that Altman exemplifies, along with Schrader, John Milius, Paul Mazursky, and Martin Scorsese (after he left Little Italy). Whatever their subjects, there is a feeling about their films that is airless, hermetic—a kind of smugness just at *being* films. These men—and now this woman, Tewkesbury—seem to think of filmmaking itself simultaneously as a deer park of privilege and the answer to every question. The world furor about film in the last 20 years, which has blessed us in many ways, has also produced minds which believe that f. stops and Dolby recording systems and color corrections enclose the secret of the universe, shared by a privileged few, and that their pronouncements on film, simply *because* they are on film, resolve all mysteries, plumb all depths. In *Name* Rudolph uses downward swish pans and a lateral pan looking through the windows of an empty room while Chaplin moves around the outside of a house, and presumably such cinematic devices—no, the mere relish of them—more than compensate for the vacuity of the script and the poor acting. In *Boyfriends* the long shot and freeze frame of the last sequence presumably compensate for the fact that Shire's picture-long "search for herself" has revealed nothing other than that she's more of a dangerous loon than ever.

In contrast to this inbred filmmaking, I'd offer the modest example of *Real Life*, which is *about* one kind of filmmaking but doesn't stop there; or *The Deer Hunter*, which for two-thirds of the way bypasses film consciousness for an attempt at film art. Or—a dangerous example—*Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, whose long last sequence is not about divinities from outer space but about Film as Divinity—but thoroughly, drenchingly so, without evasion or fudge. Or—a more dangerous example in this argument—*Norma Rae*, very skillfully made by an old pro but doubtless corny to the film hipsters because he looked past his skill to service.

The Altman Group—let's call them—are building a new kind of Hollywood fantasyland. The old one was a source of fulfillment for the secret dreams of the world. The new one, equally but differently distinct from life as lived, revels in the fantasy that filming is life. The world at large looks to get much less out of this new fantasy. When Godard was diving into film in the 1960s, I didn't like much of the result, but there was no question of his intent. Whether he succeeded or not, he was out to shake acceptances, to enlarge the film's power to transform consciousness. The Altman Group is out only to preen its skills and will admit us, when absolutely necessary, only for purposes of admiration.

Andrei Platonov: 1899-1951

An Early Soviet Master

The literary fate of the Soviet writer Andrei Platonov has been compared to that of Herman Melville: a writer of exceptional originality and profundity who was ignored by his contemporaries but rediscovered and given a place of honor in the national literary pantheon by a later generation. At the time of his death in 1951, Platonov was an unknown figure both inside and outside the Soviet Union. His name is no more than a footnote, if that, in histories or surveys of Soviet literature published in the West. Yet during the past decade and a half, collections of Platonov's stories have appeared in the Soviet Union in several printings of 50,000 and 100,000 copies each that quickly sold out. He is written about with respect and enthusiasm both in the Soviet press and in the Russian émigré journals, and translations into other languages are appearing with ever greater frequency. Two noted poets, Yevgeny Yevtushenko and Joseph Brodsky, have provided reverential introductions to American editions of Platonov. For the younger Soviet generation, Platonov has by now become a prominent member of the admired pleiad of post-Revolutionary prose writers that includes Zamyatin, Bulgakov, Babel, Zoshchenko and Olesha. If the growth of Platonov's reputation continues, he might well end up the brightest star of that pleiad.

But the comparison with Melville is perhaps misleading. Melville, while undervalued, was after all published and available, while Platonov's most significant works—his novels and his best plays—have yet to appear in print in the Soviet Union and are known to his admirers there either through *samizdat* or through foreign editions. Recent Soviet editions of Platonov have as a rule avoided including his more stylistically innovative and philosophically daring stories, which was also the case with the English-language collection, *Fro and Other Stories*, brought out by the Progress Publishers in Moscow in 1972. Nevertheless, there is by now enough of Platonov's work in print, in Russian and in English, to permit a tentative evaluation of his significance and achievement.

II

Andrei Klimentov, who changed his name legally to Platonov in the early 1920s, was born in 1899, the eldest of 10 children of an illiterate railroad mechanic. He had to quit school and go to work at a railroad yard at 15 to help support his family. After the Revolution he took part in the civil war, joining the Bolshevik party in 1920, but resigning from it under mysterious circumstances in 1921. Later, Platonov was a journalist on various provincial newspapers, combining this work with participation in land reclamation and irrigation projects in his native Voronezh province. After the success of his first collection of stories, *The Locks of Epifan*, in 1927, Platonov moved to Moscow to become a full-time writer.

This biographical background supplied the vantage point and the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

subject matter of Platonov's writings. His characters are poor peasants or railroad mechanics and engineers, the people who remain on the lowest rung of the economic ladder and for whom food shortage is a constant fact of life from the days before the October Revolution to the eve of World War II. Both the author and his characters love machinery—locomotives, power plants, turbines—with a poetic and lyrical love that is quite different from the artificially instilled cult of tractors and factories typical of other writers of the period. "The poor hard-working thing!" thinks the peasant hero of Platonov's story "Makar the Doubtful" (1929) about the engine of a streetcar in Moscow. "How it pulls the car and strains itself. But it's good that it carries useful people to one spot, thereby preserving live feet." In Platonov's writings about the civil war and the collectivization, his compassion extends not only to the common people whose welfare and comfort are repeatedly sacrificed to political expediency, but also to the tormented and mistreated farm animals and machinery.

By 1931, Platonov was in trouble with the Soviet authorities over his "For Future Use," a burlesqued travelogue through the newly collectivized farms, one of several pieces he wrote satirizing the bureaucratization of village life in the 1920s and 1930s. Stalin himself is reported to have written "scum" in the margin of the journal where "For Future Use" appeared. Platonov went on publishing sporadically throughout the 1930s and 1940s, surviving in part through luck and in part through the protection of Maxim Gorky and Mikhail Sholokhov.

With the advent of Socialist Realism as the only permissible mode of expression in Soviet literature, Platonov was forced to tone down or entirely give up the two most distinctive aspects of his personal style: his one-of-a-kind literary language (a blending of workers' slang and the post-Revolutionary Soviet officialese into an unexpectedly poetic amalgam) and the type of imagery that in the West came to be known as surrealistic or absurdist. Platonov's surrealistic inclinations placed him within an important trend that was played down in Soviet criticism and overlooked in the West. It can now be seen that a whole array of Soviet writers perceived the revolutionary transformation of the country as an absurd phantasmagoria, in which guilt and innocence had no logical basis and gratuitous violence erupted in unpredictable and irrational forms. Platonov's prose fiction belongs within this continuum together with the poetry of Nikolai Zabolotsky (perhaps the finest poet to emerge in the post-Revolutionary period, Zabolotsky was given a labor camp sentence for his masterful surrealistic narrative poem about collectivization, "The Triumph of Agriculture"); the nonsense verse of Nikolai Oleinikov, widely circulated in manuscript in the 1930s and 1940s, but

Andrei Platonov

not published until the 1970s; and the absurdist plays of Daniil Harms and Alexander Vvedensky, rediscovered and much studied in the West in recent years.

III

Platonov's two novels now available in English (*Chevengur* and *The Foundation Pit*), his satirical stories of the late 1920s and his two important plays, *The Barrel Organ* and *Fourteen Red Huts*, outline his bleak but remarkably consistent vision of how a Marxist-Leninist revolution impinges upon the poor peasants and the unlettered workers, i.e., the very people in whose name and on whose behalf the revolutions of our century have been made. The revolutionary change itself is dealt with in *Chevengur*, Platonov's longest and most ambitious prose fiction, begun in 1926, when the memories of his own experiences during the civil war were still fresh. Only the first few chapters were published during the writer's lifetime as a separate novella called "Origins of a Master Craftsman." Maxim Gorky read the complete novel in 1929 and wrote Platonov that he found it extremely interesting, but unpublishable because its portrayal of the Revolution was "lyrical and satiric" and because it painted revolutionaries in an "ironic hue," making them look like "madmen and crackpots." A truncated version of the Russian text of *Chevengur*, with its beginning portions missing, was brought out by the YMCA Press in Paris in 1972. The new English translation by Anthony Olcott is the first edition of the novel in its entirety.

In the early chapters of *Chevengur*, we meet two peasant boys who live in an impoverished pre-Revolutionary village plagued by chronic lack of rain and crop failure. Sasha Dvanov, the future hero of *Chevengur*, is a sensitive, responsive and studious child; Prokofy (or Proshka), whose parents have taken in the orphaned Sasha, is a selfish and manipulative little boy who contrives to get Sasha expelled from the family during a famine, to get more food for himself. The two boys grow up in time to take part in the Revolution. Both of them join the Bolshevik party and each one brings to the implementation of its program his own understanding determined by his personal character and outlook.

The greater part of *Chevengur* is concerned with the efforts of Sasha Dvanov and several other idealistic young proletarians to achieve universal brotherhood and socialism in their province during the aftermath of the Revolution and civil war. Their main handicap is the absence of a blueprint for converting the hostile and illiterate peasantry into class-conscious Communists. The writings of Karl Marx, they are sure, must contain an infallible recipe for such a conversion, but none of these revolutionaries has read Marx. In the Kremlin there live the infinitely wise and benevolent comrades Lenin and Trotsky, who know how to go about it, but they are inaccessible and Moscow is too far away. So the idealistic young activists take over the small town of Chevengur and proceed to establish their version of socialism, which they expect to be transformed soon into true communism. Because Lenin had told them that the worst enemy of the working class is the bourgeoisie (those "harmful insects," in Lenin's terminology), anyone in Chevengur who owns a home, no matter how modest, is killed or expelled from the town. The inhabitants submit meekly, convinced that the happiness of mankind will

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

be attained by their demise.

The revolutionaries who run Chevengur resemble medieval monks or knights errant far more than any types familiar from the 19th or 20th century. One of them, prior to his Chevengur experience, had rigged out some metal armor for himself and held a village captive with bombs and grenades, trying to terrorize the villagers into becoming free men and punishing them if they asked for permission to do something. Another young Bolshevik has a cult of the martyred revolutionary virgin Rosa Luxemburg, dedicating his exploits to her memory like a medieval paladin.

After the proclamation of Lenin's New Economic Policy, which permitted a certain amount of private enterprise and instantly raised the standard of living in the country, the rulers of Chevengur see the cause of communism betrayed and cut the town off from the rest of the Soviet Union. The purity of their own communist faith leads them to expect cosmic changes to follow extermination of the exploiting class, among them the abolition of cold weather in winter, resurrection of the dead and visits from proletarians of other galaxies. Lest we accuse Platonov of fantasy or exaggeration, we should remember that in their poetry written right after the October Revolution, Mayakovsky and Esenin also expected the Revolution to effect changes in the sun and the planets or, closer to our time, that the broadcasts of the recently deposed regime in Phnom Penh urged the Cambodian working people to become "masters of the earth and water, of nature and of the future." The Chevengur experiment is ended when the town leadership is massacred by a military detachment they assume to be "Cossacks and Constitutional Democrats on horseback" (the English translation misses the point of this passage), but which is probably a punitive unit of the Red Army, sent to put an end to an insubordinate leftist splinter of the party. The idealistic Sasha Dvanov drowns himself in a lake, a male Ophelia unable to survive the collapse of his dream of brotherhood.

IV

The next stage of the Revolution is reflected in such Platonov stories of the late 1920s as "The City of Gradov," "Makar the Doubtful" (both included in *Collected Works*), "Resident of the State" and "For Future Use" (neither one as yet translated into English). It was these stories that Alexander Solzhenitsyn had in mind when he mentioned Platonov in his open letter to the Congress of Soviet Writers in 1967 as one of the first to realize the nature of Stalinism and to warn against it. In these stories Platonov documents the rise of the authoritarian bureaucrats, fanatical inquisitors and opportunistic time servers, that followed on the triumph of Marxist orthodoxy and the ban on all dissent. As Platonov saw it, the total domination of the country by such people was what made possible the next "great leap forward" (to borrow a somewhat later non-Russian term), the collectivization of agriculture by Stalin in 1931. This is the subject of Platonov's novel *The Foundation Pit*, surely one of the grimmest literary works of the century, now available in two English translations.

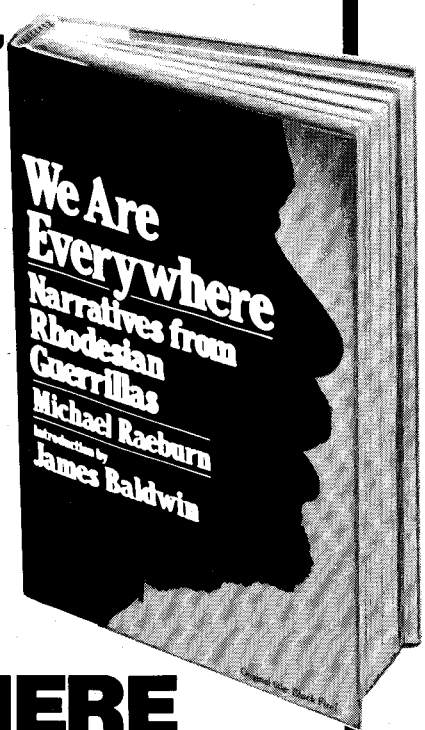
The Foundation Pit is set exactly 10 years after the finale of *Chevengur*. The heroes are the lowest men on the totem pole of the by now supposedly classless and equitable society: the poorly-paid construction workers who are digging the foundation pit for a huge apartment house for the victorious proletariat. The plan for the building is being constantly revised by the remote central authority, so that the pit has to be altered and enlarged as soon as it is completed and the construction proper can never really get started. In the second half of the novel, the more conscientious workers are sent to the countryside to help out with the collectivization. Once again the country is told that the prosperity and safety of the masses will be assured only if a particular social group is exterminated. This time it is the *kulaks*—defined in the novel as any peasant who owns a horse or a cow or more than two sheep (during the preceding period of the New Economic Policy, peasants were officially encouraged to raise livestock to assure a better food supply for the country).

The hallucinatory sequence of scenes in which a group of activists that includes a tame bear and an angelic six-year-old girl—who speaks entirely in party slogans—marches from home to home determining who is and who is not a *kulak* (with the bear and the child casting the decisive votes), shows that Platonov's surrealistic treatment is far more adequate for conveying the historical nightmare of collectivization than any realistic or objective approach could be. At the end of the novel the *kulaks* and their families are loaded on rafts and allowed to float out into the ocean (in real life, they were loaded into

"Gripping reading"
"Timely and vivid"
"Historic action at its strongest"

This is just a small sampling of the praise that overseas reviewers have been heaping on *We Are Everywhere*, a portrait of freedom fighters in Africa, told from the point of view of the guerrillas themselves. These dramatizations of guerrilla struggles from 1964 to 1972 are based on actual interviews as well as extensive research. Movingly, excitingly, *We Are Everywhere* provides a crucial insight into one of the central problems of our time.

$8.95, now at your bookstore



WE ARE EVERYWHERE
Narratives from Rhodesian Guerrillas
by MICHAEL RAEBURN
Introduction by James Baldwin
RANDOM HOUSE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

jammed trains and sent to slow death in extermination camps). The remaining peasants, terrified and demoralized, are herded into collective farms while the head activist who organized the local collectivization is discredited and destroyed after a directive arrives from the central party organization accusing him of slipping "down the right and the left slope from the clear-cut ridge of the proper party line."

In the oddly carnival-like atmosphere of *Chevengur*, in the oppressive, nightmarish world of *The Foundation Pit*, and in the rarefied desert air of Platonov's wonderful novelette of the mid-1930s "Dzhan," the good men who strive for justice have to work with those whose idea of revolution is violence, coercion or gratification of power lust. Brotherhood remains an unattainable dream so long as the brothers are Cain and Abel, as in Platonov's experience they always are. Proletarian revolution is a shining ideal in all of Platonov's writings, no matter how much misery its implementation may bring to the proletariat. The introductions to the Soviet editions of his stories stress at length that he had always remained the faithful son of the Revolution, no matter how harshly he may have criticized some of its concomitant abuses. But, as Mikhail Geller has pointed out in his preface to the truncated émigré edition of *Chevengur*, Platonov's concept of revolution comes not from Marx or Lenin, but from the enigmatic 19th-century religious philosopher Nikolai Fyodorov (1828-1903).

Extravagantly admired in his day by Dostoevsky and by Tolstoy (who declared that he was proud to live in the same century with Fyodorov), Nikolai Fyodorov is today an obscure figure to both Russians and non-Russians. His philosophy combined a critique of Christianity with utopian socialism. His principal work is *Philosophy of the Common Task*, published after his death by his disciples. The common task, as he saw it, was the overcoming of all diversity and hostility between people and the eventual conquest of infirmity and death through recognition of the mutual kinship of all humanity. For Fyodorov, division into the rich and the poor was bad; but far worse was the division into the clever organizers and "doers" and the passive masses who are told what to think, feel and do by those "doers."

When Fyodorov writes that with the establishment of Christianity as the dominant religion "the restoration of those fallen away was turned into coercion and catechizing into a holy war, the baptizers and apostles themselves became swordbearers, repentance took the form of inquisition [and] external incorporation into the Church became internal isolation"—all we need do is substitute "communism" and "party" for "Christianity" and "church" to get the very gist of Platonov's critique of Soviet society in *Chevengur* and *The Foundation Pit*. It is to Fyodorov that we can trace the persistent parallels in *Chevengur* between communism and the age of the Crusades. One of Platonov's very best stories of the 1940s, "Aphrodite" (included in *Fro and Other Stories* and *The Fierce and Beautiful World*), contains an excellent outline of the philosophical ideas Platonov shared with Fyodorov, ideas which Platonov ingeniously palmed off in the story as "Leninist."

ANDREI PLATONOV IN ENGLISH

The Fierce and Beautiful World
translated by Joseph Barnes
(E.P. Dutton & Co.)

The Foundation Pit
translated by Mirra Ginsburg
(E.P. Dutton & Co.)

Collected Works
(Ardis Press)

Chevengur
translated by Anthony Olcott
(Ardis Press)

V

Much of Platonov's work of the last two decades of his life—his rather tame literary criticism (a collection of it was issued in Moscow in 1970), his wartime reporting, his adaptations of folk tales for children and many of his stories of the 1930s and 1940s with their contrived happy endings—is of the safe and drab variety considered acceptable in the Soviet Union. But during those same years, Platonov also produced a number of unpublished plays in which he continued his social criticism couched in his earlier surrealistic manner.

In *The Barrel Organ* (I'd have translated the title as *The Hurdy Gurdy*), a co-op that processes crayfish is demoralized when flocks of migratory birds, said to be fleeing from the "crisis of the bourgeoisie" in Western Europe, descend unexpectedly upon the village. The arrival of the birds is a welcome alleviation of the chronic food shortage, but the co-op administration is handicapped by lack of directions from the center about what to do with the birds. Later on in the play, the administration tries to solve the food problem by introducing new products made of weeds and bird droppings.

The men who run the co-op in *The Barrel Organ* are clearly the Soviet variants of the predatory sharks of capitalism, looking after their own interests as best they can within the stranglehold of the overall production plan. Their opponents are an idealistic poet-inventor Alyosha and his girl-friend Myud. Myud's name is an acronym for "International Day of Youth" and she suffers chronic depression because she was born under capitalism and "groaned under it for the first two years of her life." Alyosha invents a near-human robot named Kuzma, programmed to shout slogans about the radiant future of socialism. But because of the inadequacy of Soviet technology, Kuzma periodically lapses into counterrevolutionary and anti-Soviet denunciations. There are also visiting foreigners—a Danish scientist and his daughter who envy the co-op members their poverty and ideological purity and are in turn envied by them for their suitcases full of expensive food and clothing.

In the Soviet literature of Platonov's time, foreign visitors have been portrayed as either men and women of good will who are easily converted from capitalism to communism after a quick tour of the Soviet Union, or else as evil saboteurs, intent on wrecking peaceful socialist progress on orders from international imperialism. Platonov is unique in depicting foreign visitors as victims of their own gullibility, lapping up the rhetoric and the propaganda ("I love it!" exclaims the visiting Dane upon being shown a circular entitled "On the Principles of Achieving Enthusiasm Through Self-Stimulation") and blind to the actual nature of Soviet society.

A visit of a distinguished foreigner is also central to *Fourteen Red Huts*, Platonov's play published for the first time in 1972 in the Russian-language literary journal *Grani* in West Germany. Here the visitor is a world-famous English scholar who was once a personal friend of Karl Marx and now, at the age of 101, comes to the USSR in his capacity as head of the "Commission of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

League of Nations on Solving the Universal Economic Riddle, Etc." His name is Haws, an anagram of Shaw, as in George Bernard.

Haws stays at a remote collective farm, run with an iron hand by a peasant girl of 19 named Suenita (the Russian word for "vanity" as in "vanity of vanities," with the negative particle *ni* stuck in the middle). He witnesses the misery, hunger and casual violence to which the Soviet villagers have been reduced by the collectivization, but, taking a long-range historical view, he still finds their way of life superior to anything that the capitalist West has to offer. On a more superficial level, *Fourteen Red Huts* is Platonov's bitter satiric blast at G. B. Shaw's widely publicized propaganda campaign on behalf of Stalin; in his *Rationalization of Russia* and his speeches of the 1930s, Shaw defended Stalin's purges and maintained that the collectivization had brought the Soviet people the highest standard of living in Europe. But in the portions that deal with Suenita's relationship to her lover, her child and to the other villagers, the play is a strikingly poetic, profound and often baffling meditation on the nature of power and cooperation, of loyalty and betrayal. Its key, one suspects, can be found in a detailed study of Fyodorov's *Philosophy of the Common Task.*

* * *

Any translator who undertakes to render Andrei Platonov's highly idiosyncratic Russian into another language deserves a medal for sheer bravery. The best version of his work that we have in English is Mirra Ginsburg's translation of *The Foundation Pit.* Mirra Ginsburg has no difficulty with the complexities of Platonov's colloquial or elliptic diction. The rival version of *The Foundation Pit* by Thomas P. Whitney in *Collected Works* is often quite good at capturing Platonov's eerie quality, but it is marred by the translator's misunderstanding of many important passages. The translations of Platonov's stories by Joseph Barnes in *The Fierce and Beautiful World* and by assorted British translators in *Fro and Other Stories* are also good and faithful, despite occasional minor misreadings.

The two important new additions to the Platonov canon in English, *Collected Works* and *Chevengur*, come from Ardis Press, owned and operated by Carl R. and Ellendea Proffer. Over the past years, the Proffers have sponsored a large number of translations from the Russian, which they publish either in separate books or in their literary journal, *Russian Literature Triquarterly.* They select their texts with unerring taste and an awareness of what needs to be translated. Yet they often sabotage their publishing house's best efforts by refusing to take much interest in the stylistic quality or fidelity of the translations they publish. Translations of Platonov's stories in *Collected Works* range from the merely adequate to the truly appalling (e.g., "The City of Gradov," done by a translator who does not understand the Russian case system, can't tell singular from plural and thinks that she is translating from Russian into English when she renders "Athens and the Apennine Peninsula" as "the Afiny and the Apeninsk Peninsulas" or "the proletarian prophet Elijah" as "Proletariat Ilya Prorok"). Carl Proffer's own translation of the play *The Barrel Organ* suffers from what looks like simple lack of proofreading, so that the line "Myud is always touching people and objects with her hands" comes out as "Myud is always touching the hands of the people and objects."

The most regrettable casualty of this lackadaisical approach is Anthony Olcott's potentially fine translation of Platonov's most important single work, *Chevengur.* Olcott, who did his doctoral dissertation on Platonov, and who has been allowed to work with his unpublished texts in the Soviet Union, is probably the foremost Platonov specialist in the West. He has a genuine knack for capturing both Platonov's chilling vision and his wacky humor in English, but only when he understands the Russian text fully. Again and again, however, Olcott stumbles over Platonov's colloquialisms and ellipses, with results that are either nonsense (a response to a plea for a glass of vodka, "Well, old man, do you want it so badly?" is rendered by Olcott as "Well, old man, or just because?") or drastic distortions of meaning (the statement that only one man was present at the Bolshevik party headquarters because "the rest were away, governing" is read as "the rest had been excommunicated" because the translator mistook *otluchit'sia,* "to be away" for *otluchit',* "to excommunicate"). The key term *bobyl',* "landless peasant," is mistranslated throughout the novel as "hermit." Surely Anthony Olcott and his publisher should have realized that nothing short of total native command of idiomatic Russian would suffice for translating a text of such complexity; surely they could have secured a native

Issues in Contention

The Environmental Protection Hustle
by Bernard Frieden

The Environmental Protection Hustle presents compelling evidence that the motives of some environmentalists are not as pure as the Sierra snows.

"The arguments are familiar, but this time they come not from some disgruntled developer whose bulldozers have been opposed by the Sierra Club, but from an academic authority whose book cites chapter and verse."—*San Francisco Chronicle*
$12.50

Economic and Environmental Impacts of a U.S. Nuclear Moratorium, 1985-2010
Second edition
by members of the Institute for Energy Analysis
edited by Alvin M. Weinberg
$17.50

Regulating Safety:
An Economic and Political Analysis of Occupational Safety and Health Policy
by John Mendeloff
$15.00

The Urban Question:
A Marxist Approach
revised edition
by Manuel Castells
$9.95, paperback
$25.00, hardcover

The MIT Press
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02142

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

speaker's help with the more thorny passages.

Andrei Platonov may well be recognized one day as one of the central figures of 20th-century Russian and Western literature. In his best works, he exploited his social origins, his proximity to momentous historical events and his prodigious imagination to map out some of our century's enduring problems. His roots in the Russian tradition point back to Gogol and Dostoevsky and his closest parallels in the West seem to be Kafka and Joseph Heller's *Catch 22*. Readers who delve into Mirra Ginsburg's version of *The Foundation Pit*, into "Dzhan" "Aphrodite" in the Joseph Barnes collection and, despite the misreadings that could have been avoided, into Anthony Olcott's translation of *Chevengur*, will be rewarded with an intellectual experience they will not easily forget.

Simon Karlinsky

Simon Karlinsky is professor of Slavic languages and literatures at Berkeley and editor of *The Wilson-Nabokov Letters*, to be published by Harper & Row.

Books Considered

On Becoming Carl Rogers by Howard Kirschenbaum

(Delacorte; $12.95)

As a founding father of humanistic psychology, the human potential movement and the encounter group, Carl Rogers has a lot to answer for. His client-centered therapy repudiates insight as the goal of psychotherapy, substitutes easygoing "acceptance of the client as a person," and serves as a model for equally undemanding relationships between teacher and student, pastor and parishioner, parent and child. On the one hand, Rogerian psychology legitimates the abdication of familial, educational and religious authority; on the other hand, it provides industrial managers and government bureaucrats with new techniques of psychological manipulation and with an ideology of anti-authoritarianism that helps to disguise mind control as a sincere attempt to promote the individual's "personal growth."

By preaching a "nondirective" approach to moral education and child-rearing, Rogers helped to prepare the way for the counterculture, that bland ideology of warmth and authenticity that rejects binding commitments in the name of "alternate life-styles." Predictably, Rogers has acclaimed the counterculture as a revolutionary experiment in "new ways of relating," not seeing that it helps to undermine initiative, competence and self-reliance and thus to make individuals increasingly dependent on the therapeutic state. Rogers has occasionally acknowledged the danger of a new form of tyranny based on psychological controls, but he identifies the danger exclusively with B. F. Skinner's behaviorism, ignoring the contribution of his own humanistic psychology. Seemingly radical in his advocacy of participatory democracy and personal liberation, Rogers at the same time has advised industry and government about the way to solve the "human problems" confronting them, advertising his expertise, in the titles of his books, as a means of promoting *Personality Change* or of controlling *The Problem Child*.

Howard Kirschenbaum's biography makes no attempt to explore these complexities. No wonder: it is an official biography, written by an educational psychologist now serving as director of the National Humanistic Educational Center at Saratoga Springs. Rogers gave the author access to his records, spent many hours reminiscing about his life, and went over the manuscript chapter by chapter. Kirschenbaum has internalized the jargon of authenticity, the object of which is not to clarify issues but to create an agreeable sense of rapport between a speaker and his audience. The development of Rogers's ideas can be reconstructed only with some difficulty from this well-meaning but muddled account.

Born in 1902, Rogers grew up in the western suburbs of Chicago, the son of an engineer. He graduated from the University of Wisconsin, studied for a year at the Union Theological Seminary, and transferred to Teachers College, Columbia, where he took a PhD in psychology in 1931. As a child psychologist in Rochester (1928-1939), teacher of psychology and practicing therapist at Ohio State (1940-1944), and director of the first Counseling Center at the University of Chicago (1945-1951), Rogers perfected a therapy that aimed to promote "total sensitivity to the client," "empathy," "unconditional positive regard," "congruence" and the importance of being "real." At Chicago and at the University of Wisconsin (1957-1963), he and his colleagues tried to assess the result of these techniques through quantitative psychological research. Taking up residence in La Jolla, California, Rogers embraced the spirit of the 1960s (and 1970s), serving as a "facilitator" of encounter groups, exploring the educational implications of the "I-Thou relationship," and eventually becoming a guru—with some misgivings about this role—to the new consciousness movement centered (where else?) on the West Coast.

In his formative years, Christian uplift—the fundamentalist idealism of the YMCA, the heady atmosphere of religious "fellowship"—shaped Rogers's outlook. As an undergraduate at Wisconsin, he pondered the need for "Christianizing industrial, political, social and international relationships." Although he soon exchanged fundamentalism for liberal religion, and religion for psychology, a missionary impulse still informs much of his later work. He sought to popularize the new gospel of health and to reform social relationships by remodeling them along therapeutic lines. At Union, he searched in the "jumble of religions for a faith which will enrich and vitalize our lives," eventually finding it in the religion of personal growth. Like many missionaries, however, he confused growth with the kind of "personality change" that made delinquent boys, for example, more tractable and cooperative.

Rogers retained from his Congregational upbringing a faith in human perfectibility, believing that every organism has an innate "drive toward growth, health, and adjustment." Psychoanalysis, with its insistence on libidinal and destructive drives that conflict with the demands of civilized

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

existence, did not appeal to Rogers. "When a Freudian such as Karl Menninger tells me . . . that he perceives man as . . . 'innately destructive,' I can only shake my head in wonderment."

Rogers's own approach to therapy, as a follower put it, was "as American as apple pie." It emphasized free will, in opposition to the determinism of both Freud and B. F. Skinner. Yet it contained a heavy admixture of positivism. Trained at Columbia in the standard behavioral techniques of psychological testing and measurement, Rogers tried to transform the art of psychotherapy into a positive science grounded in "scientific method," "experimental verification," "objective study" and "systematic research" into personality change and "emotional maturity." When the American Psychological Association awarded him its Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award, this recognition meant more to Rogers than any other. "It was a vivid proof that psychologists were not only not embarrassed by me, but were to some extent proud of me."

In public debates with Skinner, Rogers accused his adversary of using science "to enslave people in ways never dreamed of before, depersonalizing them, controlling them by means so carefully selected that they will perhaps never be aware of their loss of personhood." But he rejected Skinner's vision of a totally planned and administered society only to put in its place the narcissistic regimen of living "on a day-by-day basis," without reference to any goals beyond self-actualization. In many ways his ideas are closer to Skinner's than he cares to recognize. Although he worried about the political dangers of a psychiatric priesthood, his own commitment to democracy rested on the unsupported belief that although "the behavior of the human organism may be determined by the influences to which it has been exposed," it may also reflect "the creative and integrative insight of the organism itself." Characteristically, he thought the question could be decided only by further research. If "sound research" supported Skinner's view of human dependence, "then a social philosophy of expert control is clearly implied." If it indicated that men and women have at least a "latent capacity" for understanding and self-reliance, "then a psychological basis for democracy would have been demonstrated."

After criticizing Skinner for advocating rule by a scientific elite, Rogers himself left it to science to decide whether democracy has a future. He too proposed, in effect, that the fate of democratic institutions be decided in the laboratory and the clinic—decided, moreover, by the very scientists whose work had already, by his own reckoning, laid "an effective technological basis for eventual control by the state."

Instead of arguing that the capacity for understanding and self-mastery could flourish under democratic conditions alone, Rogers hoped that "objective study" would vindicate his faith in humanity. Such a humanism, which reduces to wishful thinking, poses no challenge to behaviorism. Rogers has admitted, moreover, that humanistic psychologists themselves engage in behavior modification—in the hope of making the client self-directing. Since many behaviorists make the same claim, the whole controversy between humanistic psychology and behaviorism collapses into differences of style and emphasis. If anything, humanistic psychology has proved a more effective instrument of social control, precisely because it rejects the crude "philosophy of social control by the few" and associates itself with anti-elitism, participatory democracy, human potential and other progressive slogans.

With its intellectual roots in the social gospel and positive science, its sincere but largely rhetorical allegiance to democracy, and its faith in conflict-resolution through mutual understanding and better "communication," the tradition of humanistic psychology has had a special appeal to Americans. Presenting itself as a democratic, humane alternative to rival traditions of psychological theory and practice, it has popularized a therapeutic view of life that serves in its own right as an agency of managerial and bureaucratic control. The therapeutic state has little need of Skinner when it has at its disposal a more subtle, appealing, and Americanized science of resocialization, which promotes dependence while preaching personal autonomy. What Rogers said of rival therapies applies even more forcefully to his own, which "leads gradually and subtly to some loss of confidence in the ability of the self to evaluate, to a basic dependence, . . . to subtle and sincerely well-meaning control of persons by a group which, without realizing it, has selected itself to exercise control." The psychology of "humanism" is at once the most well-meaning and the most insidious of all.

Christopher Lasch

Christopher Lasch is the author of *The Culture of Narcissism* (Norton).

Imperial Nomads: A History of Central Asia, 500-1500 by Luc Kwanten

(University of Pennsylvania Press; $25)

Historians are by choice and necessity men of the pen who depend on written records for their reconstruction of the past. This makes a history of the nomads of Asia very difficult to write. Until late in their history, these peoples did not resort to written records; and little of what they did eventually find useful to write down has been preserved to the present. Hence, for the most part, one must study the nomads on the basis of what their enemies chose to say about them, and among those enemies none was more inveterate and none kept nearly as full records as the Chinese. Hence it is necessary and appropriate that a history such as that under review should be written by a master of Chinese.

René Grousset, the principal pioneer of the scholarly effort to understand the history of the Eurasian steppe, approached the task from exactly the same vantage point. What is new about Luc Kwanten's approach is that he has tried to bring to bear on steppe history some of the conceptual sensibility recently developed among French historians of Europe. Or so he claims in his postscript.

In practice, nonetheless, much of the book consists of the sort of event-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

history Braudel and his fellow *annalistes* so despise, whereas the discussion of geographical circumstances and the human adaptation to them at which the French excel is conspicuous for its absence. To a large degree this gap between aspiration and accomplishment is due to the scrappy evidence at Professor Kwanten's disposal and to the compulsion he evidently felt to correct details of dynastic histories in the light of the latest scholarship. All the same, it turns many of his pages into dull and difficult reading.

Yet behind and beyond all the detail he offers there is a major thesis: for Professor Kwanten asserts that the nomads of the Asian steppelands were not savage hordes of uncultured barbarians, despite the fact that their sedentary contemporaries often portrayed them as such. Rather, there was a steppe imperial tradition, dating back to the early Christian centuries when the first large steppe empire, that of the Hsiung-nu, came into existence in rivalry to and symbiosis with the Han empire of China. Leading features of this steppe imperial tradition were borrowed from or evolved parallel to the Chinese imperial tradition; but the social structures underneath and the economic basis of the steppe empires were, of course, fundamentally different from those of China or any other agricultural, sedentary population.

This thesis is, I think, amply demonstrated by the data Professor Kwanten assembles, though it is not as new an idea as some of his phrases would lead one to suppose. William McGovern said much the same thing a generation ago; and so, it seems to me, did Grousset even though Professor Kwanten thinks that his predecessor was too ready to reproduce the kind of denigratory remarks about the nomads that Chinese scribes habitually used.

The richest and by far the most interesting parts of this book are the chapters dealing with the Mongol empire, established by Genghis Khan (the author prefers Chinggis) at the beginning of the 13th century and lasting for a little more than 150 years thereafter. Mongol sources exist to supplement Chinese, Persian and Russian accounts of the Mongols; European diplomat/missionaries also add something to the portrait of that extraordinary political structure. Richer sources, in turn, make it possible for Professor Kwanten to portray Mongol society, economy, polity and religious outlook far more adequately than he can when discussing earlier empires and ages. I also found his narrative account of the events of Kubilai Khan's reign (1260-1294) instructive. The quarrel between Kubilai (here transliterated Qubilai) headquartered on Chinese ground and the segment of the Mongol nation that remained on the steppe, together with the strategy of economic blockade whereby Kubilai eventually assured himself of the upper hand, had never been clear to me before reading Professor Kwanten's pages. He argues, indeed, that after the collapse of the Mongol (Yuan) dynasty in China, the subsequent warfare between Mongol and Chinese turned upon a simple economic issue: to wit, that the nomads wished to trade with the Chinese and when "unable to satisfy their economic needs peacefully, the Mongols did so violently, continually inflicting defeats on the Chinese border forces."

Kubilai Khan as emperor of China. From *Imperial Nomads.*

This is only the starkest statement in the book of a relationship that Professor Kwanten believes to have been of general and enduring significance in the historical relationship between China's agricultural society and the nomads of the steppe. China, he says, had no particular need for steppe products, whereas the nomads vitally needed Chinese goods, and if denied peaceable trade regularly took to arms to seize by force what was no longer proffered on a basis of peaceable exchange.

I am of the opinion that this thesis has much to be said in its favor and wish that Professor Kwanten had explored it more systematically than he does. If, as he says, the principal export from the steppe was horses, is it really the case that the Chinese did not need steppe goods about as much as steppe peoples needed Chinese goods? After all, it requires cavalry to match cavalry on an open frontier such as that lying between China and the Mongolian pasture lands. Fixed fortifications can do something to give infantry the means to stop cavalry raiding—the Great Wall of China is evidence of this proposition; but a mobile defense is far cheaper and often more effective.

If steppe people could raise horses more cheaply than the Chinese could, why did the Chinese not find trade with the nomads as advantageous as nomads found trade with China? Moreover, what was it that the nomads got from China that was irreplaceable, or so much cheaper that the China trade became vital to their society? Professor Kwanten refrains from answering such questions, no doubt because available sources do not really permit him to do

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

so. Yet if that is the case, can his general thesis about the critical importance of trade for the nomads and its marginality for the Chinese really be sustained?

I think it can—though only by resorting to *a priori* argument. The proposition needed to make Professor Kwanten's argument fully plausible is this: the food of the steppe was almost exclusively derived from animals, but a diet of meat and milk is needlessly rich in protein. It becomes, indeed, an extravagant diet if supplies of cereal food are available. What this means commercially is that if a nomad community can engage in trade with cereal-raising populations, the nomads can, by exchanging proteins for calories, increase their total food supply substantially. Larger populations could survive on the steppe by consuming imported grain—even if it meant giving up some of the produce of their herds in return. But once nomad populations had swelled on the basis of such an exchange, the tribesmen became dependent on its continuance: otherwise starvation—at least for some—would promptly assert its ugly power of restoring the balance between supply and demand, population and food stocks. And a society confronting such an impending crisis can indeed be expected to muster all available force for an assault on the lands where stores of cereal food are known to exist. After all, it is better to die in the saddle than to slowly pine away in a tent devoid of a last scrap of human nutriment, especially when the mobility and military skills of the nomads made raiding likely to be successful.

By comparison, a society producing cereals finds only marginal advantage in importing animal products. They may improve the diet of an upper class; landlords may be willing and even eager to exchange calorific cereals for far fewer calories of protein-rich animal-derived food. But they can do without it easily enough, whereas the nomad population, once dependent on an enlargement of its calorie supply through such trade, must either trade or raid.

The military value of horses was an offsetting consideration for the Chinese or any other sedentary society: here the nomad side of the exchange was surely equal to, or more vital than, the metal supplies or objects of luxury that nomads could and did import from civilized workshops. Nomad warfare was all but independent of metal supply: that was its strength. Otherwise the raiding/trading pattern that dominated so much of Eurasian history between the time when horseback riding first became established on the steppe (about 800 BC) and 1650 or so, when infantry gunpowder weaponry became sufficiently powerful to make nomad archers ineffective, could not have played the role it did. But in fact, between those dates, the frontier between the settled folk, toiling in their fields to produce cereal crops, and the nomads of Eurasia (both those of the northern grasslands with whom Professor Kwanten is concerned and those of the southern desert fringes who played an almost precisely parallel role) constituted the critical borderlands of the Old World, across which all the principal political-military events of some 2400 years of history took place. This is so, whether one considers the fall of Nineveh in the seventh century BC, the collapse of the Han and Roman empires in the third to fifth centuries AD, or the Moslem conquest of the seventh and the Mongol conquests of the 13th centuries. Indeed it is no exaggeration to assert that all the rulers of the civilized world, from the time of Sargon of Akkad (ca. 2250 BC) to the present, descend (either directly or with the mediation of a number of generations of sedentarization) from steppe peoples. This means that the shaping conditions of steppe and desert life cast a long shadow over the civilized societies of the agricultural zones that lay adjacent to the grasslands; and a just perspective on the past requires us to pay far more attention to the nomad element in Eurasian populations than has commonly been the case. Professor Kwanten's book conduces to this readjustment of familiar viewpoints and is to be welcomed accordingly. I only regret that he was not more bold and speculative in his analysis of nomad-sedentary relationships.

William H. McNeill

William H. McNeill is professor of history at the University of Chicago and the author of *The Rise of the West* (University of Chicago Press).

Imbalance of Power: Shifting U.S.-Soviet Military Strengths
by John M. Collins and Anthony H. Cordesman
(Presidio Press; $6.95)

The Price of Defense: A New Strategy for Military Spending
by The Boston Study Group
(New York Times; $15)

Force Without War: U.S. Armed Forces as a Political Instrument
by Barry M. Blechman and Stephen S. Kaplan
(Brookings; $19.95, $8.95 paperback)

The Carter administration's 1980 budget, which calls for increased defense spending and cuts in virtually all categories of social spending, has put liberals in a quandary. Many military experts warn of a mounting military threat. At the same time, however, the classic liberal constituencies face urban decay, inadequate health care, a sluggish economy riddled with structural unemployment and persistent inflation.

In earlier years liberals would have advocated higher social expenditures *and* higher military outlays. But the immense escalation of defense expenditures which took place under Kennedy soon led, under Johnson, to a military quagmire and an economic shambles. Liberals today, saddled with the Kennedy-Johnson legacy and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

confronted with a mounting tax revolt, are in no position to argue for guns and butter. It is guns or butter.

Fortunately, several dispassionate analyses of the US military situation have appeared in recent months. Among these, three books in particular are readily intelligible to the novice in military affairs; together they provide most of the information a reasonably educated person needs to make informed judgments about US policy.

Imbalance of Power: Shifting U.S.-Soviet Military Strengths originally was prepared for the Senate Armed Services Committee by John M. Collins of the Congressional Research Service. A commentary by Anthony H. Cordesman, former secretary to the Defense Intelligence Board, supplements the main text and senators Howard H. Baker and Jesse A. Helms provide introductions, with Helms taking care to enumerate the "myths which Mr. Collins has demolished." The things that trouble Mr. Helms include the vulnerability of the US deterrent, Soviet superiority in ground combat forces, the threat to the US Navy from Soviet cruise missiles, and the availability of only five US divisions for emergency deployment abroad.

The great merit of the Collins-Cordesman study is its combination of the best unclassified information with accompanying commentaries. The study fails, however, to provide a comprehensive analysis of overall US and Soviet military policies.

The Price of Defense is more satisfactory in this respect. Written by the Boston Study Group, six scholars more or less associated with Harvard and MIT, the study draws attention to the need for a reassessment of US military policy. "Major events of the 1960s—the Sino-Soviet split, detente and American reaction against involvement in Vietnam—should have spurred fundamental rethinking of the premises of this policy." Yet this has not occurred. "Instead, the military establishment is in the process of becoming entrenched."

The Price of Defense comes complete with the mandatory senatorial endorsement, compliments of J. William Fulbright, who wonders whether "a democracy even remotely resembling that conceived by our Founding Fathers" can long survive.

The reader need not be worried about Founding-Father America or share the Boston Study Group's conclusions to find its study useful. Graphs and tables are kept to the necessary minimum and are presented in an appealing style. Introductory chapters to each major section outline the most important considerations affecting force structures. Unlike many other studies, *The Price of Defense* makes a serious effort to distinguish between forces really needed for defense and forces which serve other purposes. Like the Collins-Cordesman study, however, *The Price of Defense* fails to say much about how forces have been used historically.

For this the reader can turn to the Blechman-Kaplan study, *Force Without War*, the product of a massive Brookings Institution research effort. If the Collins-Cordesman study presents a somewhat hawkish point of view, and *The Price of Defense* a decidedly dovish perspective, the Brookings report may fairly be characterized as middle-of-the-road.

Force Without War evaluates without preconceptions the success with which the United States employed military power, "without engaging in a continuing contest of violence," between 1945 and 1975. The study includes a quantitative analysis of 33 occasions when the US made "discrete use of force," as well as intensive case studies—several of them excellent—of several exceptionally important US military interventions.

While the value-free orientation adopted by the Brookings scholars gives their study an impressive credibility, it may also leave some readers a bit depressed. For we are left with the dreary conclusion that US interventionism inevitably rises a few years after a major war is fought, once—so to speak—the American people has overcome its unnatural aversion to war.

II

Overreaction to the Vietnam War, many experts claim today, has produced a dangerous complacency about the Soviet threat and a growing imbalance in strategic forces. The facts tell a rather different story. As of 1976, according to the Collins-Cordesman figures, the strategic balance was roughly as follows: 1549 Soviet land-based ICBMs outnumber 1054 US land-based ICBMs. But because equipping of ICBMs with multiple warheads is far more advanced in the US than in the USSR, 2154 US ICBM warheads roughly match 2109 Soviet ICBM warheads. Soviet missiles and warhead explosive yields are appreciably larger than their US counterparts, but US missiles and warheads are significantly more accurate.

The growing vulnerability of US land-based missiles is the single most troubling trend to opponents of SALT. According to Collins, however, the Soviet missiles are even more vulnerable. US missiles have the accuracy but lack the yield necessary to destroy Soviet missiles in their hardened silos; but "that condition is being corrected." Soviet missiles, on the other hand, have the yield but lack the accuracy needed to destroy US missiles; but "Soviet craftsmen have the competence to achieve impressive accuracies if ruling councils so choose." Thus the US appears to be well on its way to being capable of delivering a disabling first strike against the USSR, depriving it of its ability to retaliate, whereas Russian leaders have yet to take the decisions which would give them a comparable capability.

The assessment of relative missile vulnerabilities, moreover, leaves entirely out of account the US B-52 fleet, which has no Soviet counterpart, and the US missile submarine fleet, which is far superior to Russia's.

In 1976, says Collins, 77 Soviet submarines equipped with 842 warheads confronted 41 US submarines equipped with 4688 warheads. Any one of the US submarines, as President Carter pointed out in his State of the Union Address, could kill millions of people in every major city in the Soviet Union. There is little or no chance, according to all accounts, that Russia will acquire any time soon the ability to destroy all or even most of the US missile submarines in the hour or so a nuclear war would last. As Collins remarks, anti-submarine warfare is "mainly a time-consuming matter of attrition."

To the extent that US land-based ICBMs and bombers are becoming vulnerable, and everybody agrees they are, there is a simple solution: phase them out. This is precisely what the Boston Study Group recommends. Any Soviet leader willing to gamble on destroying the entire US submarine fleet in an hour's time is too irrational to be deterred by any means whatsoever.

The US submarine fleet alone will

AUTHORS WANTED BY NEW YORK PUBLISHER

Leading book publisher seeks manuscripts of all types: fiction, non-fiction, poetry, scholarly and juvenile works, etc. New authors welcomed. For complete information, send for booklet NR-1. It's free. Vantage Press, 516 West 34th St., New York, N.Y. 10001.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

provide the US with an invulnerable deterrent for the foreseeable future, and the public should not hesitate to say so.

III

If only conventional war were so simple. Here only the most general features of US and Soviet military postures are beyond dispute.

The Soviet Union, mindful of a long history of foreign invasion, places considerable emphasis on ground combat forces and much less stress on naval forces. While Russia's navy has grown impressively, its fundamental purpose remains defensive and obstructionist. That said, large US surface ships are far more vulnerable than they used to be.

The United States, with no enemy forces on its borders, puts less emphasis on ground combat and far more on naval deployments. Our navy, which remains second to none, is geared to protection of commerce, "projection" (as the jargon goes) of US power abroad, and movement of military supplies and personnel to locations of potential major combat: Europe, Japan, Korea and the Mid-East. Naval transport is supplemented by huge airlift capabilities, also second to none. US naval and air forces make this country the only true global power.

In a conventional war, only Europe would have to be defended entirely by means of ground combat and air-support forces. Assessment of the relative strengths and weaknesses of NATO and Warsaw Pact forces involves innumerable weapons systems, each with only partially understood combat capabilities. Depending on how the net advantage to either side is estimated, analysts reach drastically different policy recommendations.

Compounding these difficulties is the never-never world in which debate about the European balance takes place. From the outset the critical reader must be prepared to suspend all memory of nuclear arsenals, believe that nuclear weapons would not be used in a World War II style confrontation that could go on for months or years, and assume the outcome of that confrontation could be predicted down to the last detail.

All recollection of nuclear weapons duly suspended, here are the matters on which there is pretty wide agreement. Warsaw Pact forces have a large quantitative edge in virtually all weapons systems, and during the past decade the edge has widened noticeably but not dramatically. Front-line combat personnel facing each other in Europe are roughly equivalent: Collins believes the Pact's lead has gone from about 90,000 in 1970 to 170,000 in 1976. But this calculation leaves French forces and the southern European command, where NATO has the advantage, out of account. Capabilities of individual weapons systems are much disputed, but experts tend to give the US a strong advantage in aviation technology and precision-guided munitions, and the USSR a lead in armored vehicles, air defense and artillery.

Many experts feel that Pact weapons tend to be sturdier and more reliable than NATO's, which suffer to some extent from oversophistication. The Soviet Union is closing the qualitative gap which the United States has tried to maintain, and it seems fair to conclude with Collins that Pact weapons already "are competitive with (sometimes superior to) US counterparts."

Whether NATO forces would be capable of holding the front line against an all-out Warsaw Pact assault, and whether they could do so without resort to tactical nuclear weapons, is where opinions divide sharply. Collins takes a pessimistic line, contending that "the overall balance has not been so lopsided since the early 1950s, before NATO's bulwark was complete." A 1977 Brookings study held that NATO forces would either have to yield "substantial territory" or use tactical nuclear weapons immediately. The Boston Study Group characterizes such views as "extreme" and believes the Warsaw Pact could not count on breaking through NATO's front line.

Regardless of whom one chooses to believe, a strong case can be made against continued deployment of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe. The point of maintaining large US forces in Europe is to sustain the credibility of the alliance while avoiding instantaneous recourse to nuclear weapons. But "tac nukes," as Cordesman observes in the final outstanding pages of his commentary, permeate the force structures of both sides. "There is no way nuclear and conventional capability can be decoupled." The 6000 to 7000 tactical nuclear weapons maintained by the US in Europe have ranges that go up to hundreds of miles and yields which exceed the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs by up to 25-fold. Once these weapons are used, escalation to an all-out nuclear exchange would be a foregone conclusion, especially inasmuch as the Russians refuse to recognize a valid distinction between tactical and strategic nuclear war.

Whether there is any point in continuing to deploy large forces for a protracted conventional war is another question entirely. Maintaining the forces encourages detailed planning for a rerun of Hitler's Blitzkrieg, which seems frighteningly and perhaps even dangerously unrealistic. On the other hand, the persistent Soviet modernization of Pact forces must give us pause.

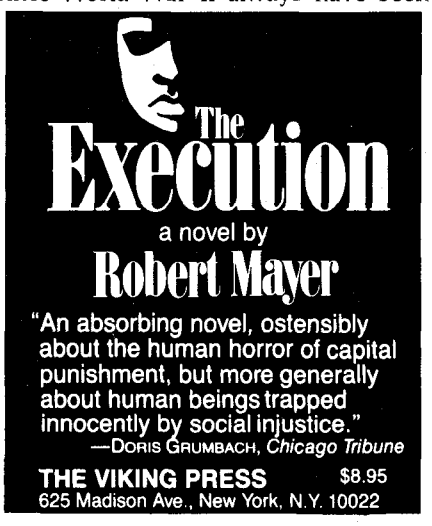
Originally the motives behind the Soviet buildup seemed clear enough. Khrushchev's sparse military budgets of the 1950s apparently led in the early 1960s to a string of serious foreign policy reverses, and once he was ousted the new leadership proceeded energetically to redress the balance. But from the early 1970s on, after the Soviet Union had achieved strategic parity and had obtained formal recognition of its position in East Europe, its military buildup might have been expected to decelerate. This, however, did not happen.

It may therefore be safest—if very expensive—to maintain NATO capabilities at current levels. NATO and Warsaw Pact forces, after all, have never engaged each other in combat. Whether this is because the Soviet Union has never had any intention of invading Western Europe, or because Russia has been deterred is anybody's guess.

IV

Debates about the military balance have a way of inevitably centering on Soviet intentions. But what about US intentions?

Imbalance of Power, like most such studies of the military balance, discusses US capabilities solely in terms of Soviet and Pact forces. This is standard procedure, since US military outlays since World War II always have been


The
Execution
a novel by
Robert Mayer
"An absorbing novel, ostensibly about the human horror of capital punishment, but more generally about human beings trapped innocently by social injustice."
—Doris Grumbach, Chicago Tribune
THE VIKING PRESS
$8.95
625 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

justified with reference to the Soviet—by extension, communist—threat.

But in the 34 years since World War II, US forces have never directly engaged Soviet forces. There have been a couple of stand-offs over Berlin, and a couple of scrapes in the Mid-East (where all experts give the US a decisive advantage). US forces have been full combatants in two major wars in which the Soviet Union only supplied opposing forces. What, then, do the US military forces actually do to counter the Soviet threat? This is what the monumental Brookings study, *Force Without War*, tells us.

Between 1945 and 1975 the United States made use of its forces in some fashion short of all-out war on a total of 215 occasions, or roughly once every two months. A fairly typical example was the dispatch of a US carrier to the Bay of Bengal during the last war between India and Pakistan. These 215 incidents do not include the Vietnam and Korean Wars, deployment of forces abroad to defend US property and citizens, the maintenance of military forces abroad on a continuing basis, or the provision of military assistance.

Of the 215 "discrete" uses of force, 19 have consisted of more or less direct nuclear threats. Four of the threats were explicit; the others amounted to pointed deployments of US strategic nuclear forces. On the 215 occasions the US employed force "without war," the Soviet Union was in some way involved only 73 times, and in less than half these incidents the United States was successful in achieving its objectives.

Of the 215 occasions on which the United States has made discrete use of force since 1945, in other words, the Soviet Union was involved as a military power only one-sixth of the time and the United States was successful in countering the Soviet threat under one-twelfth of the time.

The Brookings team arrives at many interesting conclusions on the basis of a quantitative analysis of 33 selected incidents, two of which are especially important. (1) As Soviet strategic power has grown relative to that of the United States, the discrete use of force by the US has declined. (2) But the effectiveness with which the United States has intervened has *not* depended on the character of the strategic balance. A US effort to recover strategic superiority over the Soviet Union apparently would not make use of limited conventional force more effective.

ANOMIE

Grey morning and the first snow
spends itself at the sidewalk.
A man on a slate roof
clears leaves from gutters,
his visible breath
the calligraphy for *cold*.

Grey everything but his red jacket.

Quiet pervades the houses,
men and women at their offices,
children at school or still unborn.
The cats, left alone,
seek the mean warmth of radiators.

You, too, disappear into the day,
easy as opening a door—

Where would I want to go?
I board a bus where passengers
lose themselves in the tabloids,
their hands greying with newsprint.
Crimes of passion in Montana
stir my crazy yearning to confess.

I want to go nowhere: no counterfeit
paradise, palm tree at the patio edge.
No old European city demanding
I enter its museums and theaters.
No sultry nights on the savannah.

Black trees pass in a blur,
the Germanic Museum, the coin laundry,
the Home for Little Wanderers.
Snow thickens at the window
as we pull into the terminal,
the opening wedge into emptiness.

Gail Mazur

Much of the information in the Brookings study suggests that limited military interventions are counter-productive, at least as often as not. The effectiveness of US uses of force tended to decline over time, so much so that in the long run favorable outcomes were achieved less than half the time. The larger the force level involved, the less favorable the outcome. In those instances where armed forces were engaged in "manifest activities," i.e. activities plain to local parties to the dispute, "the decline over the long run in favorable outcomes was dramatic."

The irrelevance of the strategic balance and the tendency of military interventions to arouse countervailing forces may well account for the fact that the forces built up to counter the Soviet threat have actually succeeded only one-twelfth of the time they were used.

Senator Jesse A. Helms finds it alarming that the United States has only five divisions ready for combat outside the European theater. He is also distressed that our aircraft carriers, which circled the Pacific to such magnificent effect as the Iran crisis unfolded, are vulnerable to Soviet cruise missiles. And he worries about the vulnerability of our land-based ICBMs and the military edge enjoyed by the Warsaw Pact over NATO. Senator Helms is no straw man. He represents a political force that may well capture the presidency in 1980. And his facts are real facts. The question is, what should be made of those facts?

If we wish to recover strategic superiority over the Soviet Union, gain the ability to win a conventional war in Europe, and counter Soviet activities at every turn in the third world, then we

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

indeed can ditch SALT and commence with a vigorous buildup of nuclear and conventional forces. If, on the other hand, we see concepts of superiority and inferiority as obsolete in the nuclear era, and if we are inclined to think that much of Russia's activity in the third world has been and will be self-defeating, then we can follow the general recommendations of the Boston Study Group. This would involve phasing out obsolete land-based missiles and manned bombers, maintaining forces for defense of Europe, Japan and Israel at roughly current levels, and paring down mobility forces designed for use in foreign interventions. The savings arising from such measures eventually could come to $50 billion per year.

The arguments against renewal of the arms race strike me as compelling. At the same time, though, the arguments against a very rapid dismantling of US forces also are persuasive. Since the ouster of Khrushchev, the Soviet Union has pushed relentlessly to achieve military parity with the United States. From one point of view, its achievement of parity seems to have little military meaning: no large-scale conventional war is likely to occur, and both superpowers have far larger strategic forces than could be usefully employed in a nuclear exchange. Even so, the determination with which the Soviet Union has pushed for parity does seem to indicate that its leaders believe relative force levels still have a symbolic significance which can influence the outcome of individual confrontations.

On the whole, it seems safest and sanest to begin as a matter of long-term policy of gradual paring of US forces. A policy of this kind would free at least enough funds for social relief to blunt the impact of a deflationary economic program, and in the long run it could free truly substantial funds for domestic purposes.

There is no shortage of serious proposals on how US forces could be gradually cut. Townsend Hoopes and Herbert Scoville, for example, have prepared recommendations which are similar to the Boston Study Group proposals, and these recommendations have been endorsed by many of the organizations which make up the Progressive Alliance.

Liberals, faced with the choice between guns and butter, need not despair. Cut the guns and pass along the butter.

William Sweet

William Sweet is a Washington-based freelance writer who writes regularly on arms control and related issues.

John Ford
by Andrew Sinclair

(Dial Press; $11.95)

He was half blind, he led a secret life as a spy, he was a wounded war hero, and by the time he died in 1973 he had become a full admiral in the US Navy. He was hailed in the late 1930s as America's poet laureate of democracy for such films as *Young Mr. Lincoln* and *The Grapes of Wrath*, but his Westerns suffered from genre prejudice in the 1950s, and his reverent patriotism was scorned as reactionary in the 1960s. When his last film, *Seven Women*, opened in New York in 1966, for example, it was on the bottom half of a double bill with that memorable epic, *The Money Trap*.

He directed 125 films, 66 before 1930, and 30 before 1920. Most of these early silent films have not survived, and so cannot be judged. But the sound films from *The Informer* (1935) to *The Searchers* (1956) "constitute a substantial body of sublime achievement in the cinema of this planet."

It must have embarrassed John Ford to hear Andrew Sarris deliver that cosmic tribute at a Washington award ceremony in 1973: he was uncomfortable with tony words like "artist" and "poet."

You say someone's called me the greatest poet of the Western saga. I am not a poet, and I don't know what a Western saga is. I would say that is horse-shit. I'm just a hard-nosed, hard-working, run-of-the-mill director.

This hardbitten pose was Ford's cover, the kind of thing a man with friends like Ward Bond and John Wayne *had* to say. But in dying, Ford blew his cover. Since his death, moreover, the cultural climate has grown less hostile to his frank celebration of the martial values—duty, honor, courage, obedience and loyalty. It is a mark of this new climate that, while Andrew Sarris had to argue the case for Ford's stature as recently as 1975 in his *John Ford Movie Mystery* (Indiana University Press), Andrew Sinclair assumes Ford's greatness as if it were the most settled fact in film history. John Ford, it is now clear, was not just a facile professional, ready for any job of work the studios might throw at him. Mr. Sinclair's fine book establishes beyond doubt that Ford was an artist, in the

PARTISAN REVIEW

Coming in Partisan Review:

A Symposium on Psychoanalysis

An Interview with Robert Motherwell

Isaiah Berlin on Nationalism

"Levitation," a story by Cynthia Ozick

PARTISAN REVIEW
c/o Boston University,
128 Bay State Rd., Boston, MA 02215

☐ Enter my subscription
☐ for 1 year at $10.00
☐ 1 year at $9.00 student rate

☐ Extend my subscription
☐ 2 years at $19.00
☐ 2 years at $18.00 student rate
☐ 3 years at $27.00

My check is enclosed ☐ ☐ Please bill me

Name_____
Address_____
City_____
State_____ Zip_____
*I am a student at_____

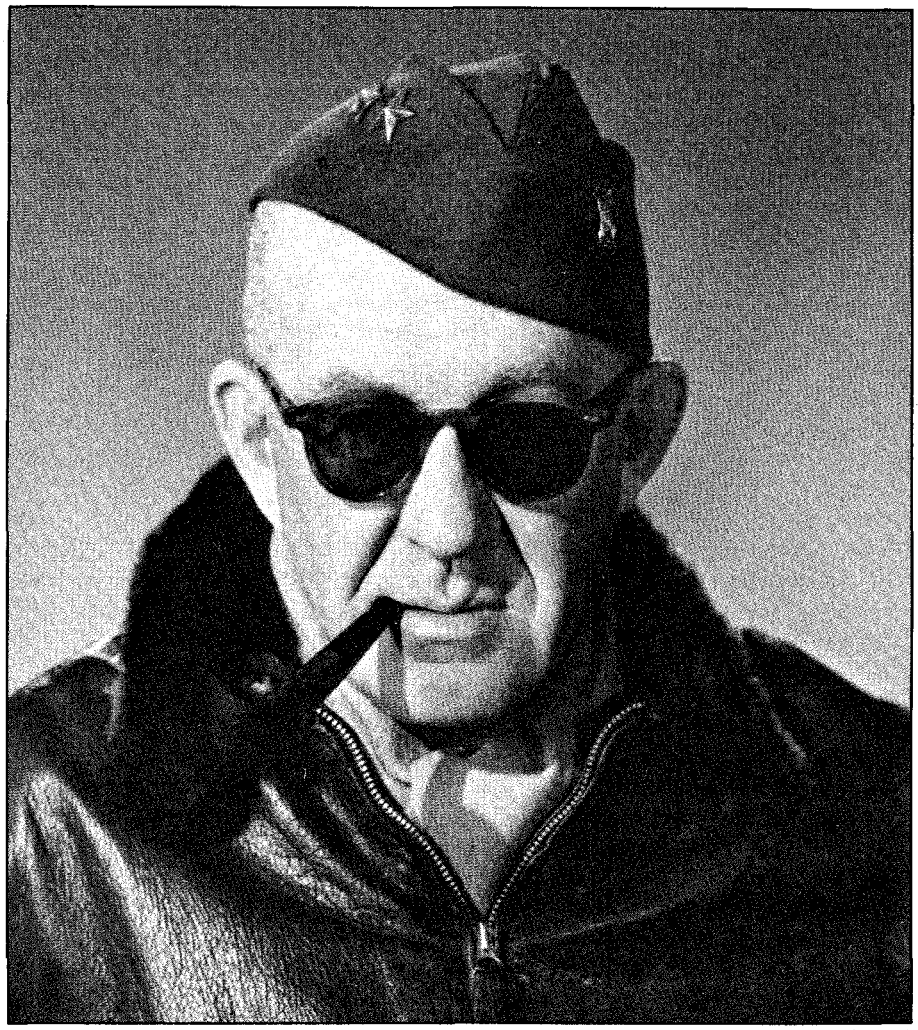
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sense that his films expressed—in images exquisitely austere and beautiful—the deepest feelings and commitments of his devoted and heroic life.

John Augustine Feeney was born on February 1, 1985 in a farmhouse on Cape Elizabeth, just north of Portland, Maine, the 11th and last child of Barbara and John A. Feeney, a saloon-keeper and minor Portland politico. John Feeney's first and strongest impression of the world must have been visual, for the view of Casco Bay from the heights above Portland is majestic, as unforgettably evocative as the sweeping shots of Monument Valley which still make viewers gasp in *Stagecoach* and *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*. But just as nature in Ford's movies is not simply scenery but the resonant frame of a moral drama, so Casco Bay for John Feeney was more than an aesthetic experience. When Teddy Roosevelt's Great White Fleet anchored in the Bay, the boy saw a vision of the might and moral purpose of his family's adopted country that he was not to forget. It was the source of a commitment as of the essence of the man as his sense of beauty. "I came from a family of peasants," he once said. "They came here and got an education. They served this country well. I love America. I am not political."

Although John Feeney was a good athlete and a fair student in high school, his application to the Naval Academy was turned down, a hurt which was not salved by winning an athletic scholarship to the University of Maine. Ford spent only a few days on the Maine campus, then left to join his brother in Hollywood.

Frank Feeney was an adventurer who seems to have sprung from the world of Howard Hawks, Ford's only peer among American directors. Frank had run away from home to fight in the Spanish-American War, had escaped a second time to join the circus and was a stuntman and actor in the infant film industry when his brother joined him in 1914. Along the way, Frank had taken the name Ford. According to family lore, this was the name of an actor he had replaced as an understudy. But Mr. Sinclair points out that Ford was in fact the standard Americanization of Feeney; and that, besides, if Frank wanted to help his career at the box office and protect his family's name from a sullying association with a dubious profession, Ford was an impeccable Anglo-Saxon cover for both purposes.



John Ford

In any case, Frank's younger brother adopted the name, first as Jack Ford, then reverting to John in the 1920s. One wonders at the meaning of these name changes. Was John Ford signaling his independence of John A. Feeney Sr.? Mr. Sinclair doesn't say; indeed he avoids psychological speculation throughout. Quite rightly, in my view.

Some subjects invite psychological analysis. John Ford is not one of these. His films are not disguises or displacements of his feelings. They are direct, unironic expressions of his Catholicism, his Irishness, his patriotism, his feeling for the past, and for the moral weight of the past as it makes itself felt in the lives of individuals and groups in the form of legend and custom and myth. The disguises with Ford are all on the surface: the man's man hides the artist; the admiral, the pacifist; the director, the spy; John Ford, John A. Feeney Jr. So perhaps John Ford's taking his name was a case of sheer fortuity (after all, Frank had it first), a piece of the word's texture, in Nabokov's chastening distinction, rather than its text. Biographers tend to make everything text, to find the meaning of a life encoded in its utterances and acts. Mr. Sinclair deserves praise for resisting this convention of his genre: he has an eye for the mere meaningless texture of his subject's life. If this makes his book less exciting intellectually, it also makes it more true.

II

Ford arrived in Hollywood in time to get a bit part in *The Birth of a Nation* (as a Ku Klux Klansman), then worked for his brother, now a director, as a stuntman before directing his first film, *The Soul Herder*, a 1917 oater starring Harry Carey. Carey's name appears frequently in the filmography that follows Mr. Sinclair's text. It is not the only such name: the use of actors like John Wayne, Henry Fonda, Victor McLaglen, Ward Bond, Maureen O'Hara, as well as such obscurities as Dan Borzage and Frank Ford himself (who appears in the filmography as a "bartender," "saloon keeper" and "drunk") was a trademark of Ford's throughout his career. This "ritualized casting," as Andrew Sarris has finely said, "ran counter to the conventional illusionism of the movie

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

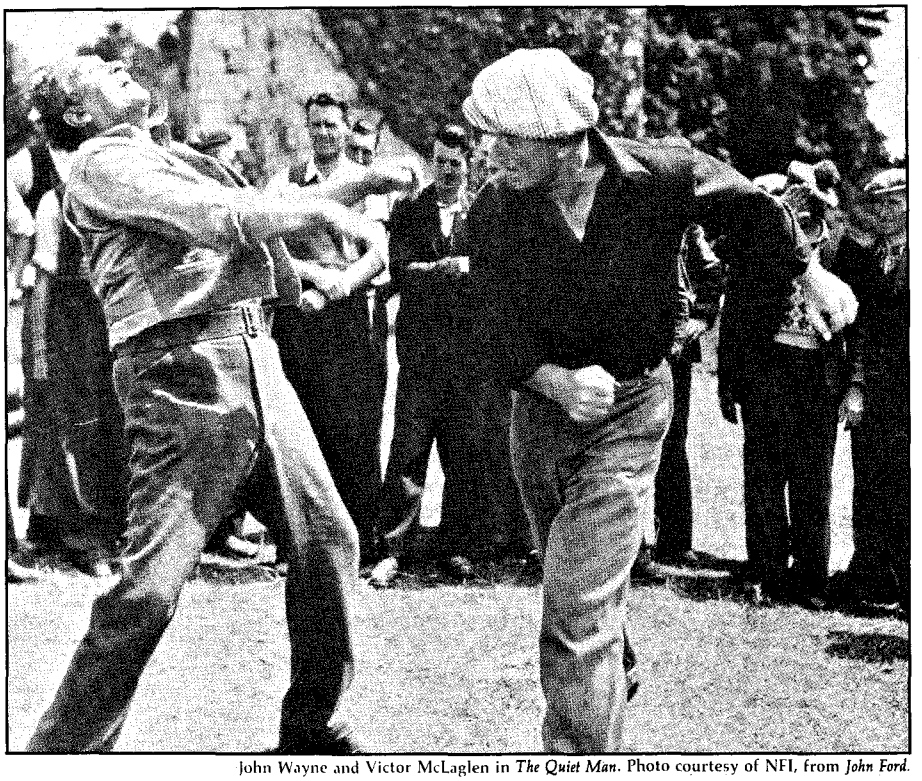
industry." It richly expressed Ford's communal feelings, however.

John Ford's films are moving documents of the conservative imagination. Their themes are the necessity of unity, order, law and community. Their most common dramatic situation involves men enduring a physical and moral ordeal, in which, as Ford once put it, "individuals become aware of each other" because they have been brought face to face "with something larger than themselves." Ford's communal casting thus expresses his themes and mirrors his dramatic situations in a remarkably organic way. It makes for a unity of ingredient and enactment very rare in art.

Moreover, as Mr. Sarris has also said, Ford's casting adds a level of meaning to his films. When in *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (1962), for example, we realize that the man in the closed coffin in the early scenes of the movie is John Wayne, we can't help but think back over the 30 years of his collaboration with John Ford and be more moved by the scene than we would be if the dead man were played by another actor, the latest pretty face sent by the studio, say, for whom we—and John Ford—would have accumulated no debt of feeling.

If Ford was loyal to his actors, hiring their sons and grandsons after they died or grew too old for service, he was equally loyal to his country—to its Navy especially. Sometime in the 1920s Ford was recruited as an unpaid secret intelligence agent for the Navy. Thereafter he used his cover as a film director to photograph the evidence of Japanese militarism in the Pacific. Even when ostensibly on vacation, sailing down the California coast with his wife, Mary, and his friends, Ward Bond, John Wayne and the writer Dudley Nichols, Ford was on duty for the Navy, spying on the Japanese fishing boats which entered our waters with alarming ease in those lax pre-Pearl Harbor days. It all sounds a little larky, but Ford took it seriously, and the Navy must have found his intelligence useful. Mary Ford got into the act too. She once feigned drowning in order to be picked up by a Japanese fisherman: below deck she found a photograph of her humble rescuer in the uniform of an officer of the Japanese Imperial Navy.

Ford's poor eyesight kept him out of World War I ("It remains the chief irony in Ford's life," Mr. Sinclair says, "that he could hardly see"). He made up for this in the Second World War by serving as the commander of the Field Photography Branch of the OSS from early in 1941 right up until the end in 1945. Mr. Sinclair says that Ford saw his wife, who was herself strenuously involved in the war effort, only once in the four years of his service. That has the ring of the apocryphal, but I don't doubt that it's true. Ford couldn't be with Mary because he had a war to photograph. He was wounded in the arm while filming the Japanese attack on Midway; he went with the Marines for a raid on Makin Island and flew on the Doolittle raid over Tokyo. He filmed the invasion of North Africa; and he had his men set up their cameras to record D-Day on the beach—the German side—*before* that invasion. Then he was off for a PT boat raid on Yugoslavia, before meeting a naked Lord Wingate in the Burma bush.



John Wayne and Victor McLaglen in *The Quiet Man*. Photo courtesy of NFI, from *John Ford*.

'Wherever there's a fight so hungry people can eat, I'll be there.'
'Wherever there's a cop beating up a guy, I'll be there.'
'And when our people eat the stuff they raise, and live in the houses they build, why, I'll be there too.'

That's Ford's hero, Tom Joad, at the end of *The Grapes of Wrath*; he could be describing John Ford in World War II. Wherever there was a GI, Ford was there.

Ford's postwar films, *They Were Expendable* (1945), *My Darling Clementine* (1946), and especially his great Cavalry Trilogy of the late 1940s, *Fort Apache*, *Rio Grande* and *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*, show the deepening effect of the war on his art. They are sparer, with less of the dappling mannerisms of his early work, and less of the sentimentality that makes *How Green Was My Valley* (1941),

BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD

Planning Livable Cities
by Wolf Von Eckardt

"The theme of this stimulating book by the architecture critic of the *Washington Post* is that 'cities are becoming a respectable place to live again.'" —*Publishers Weekly*

"a significant book"
—*Wall Street Journal*

"And compelling it is for anyone who cares about how we are going to live in urban America."
—*Washington Post*

Illustrated by Forrest Wilson
$10.00 at bookstores or direct from the publisher.

NEW REPUBLIC BOOKS
1220 19th Street, NW
Washington DC 20036

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his last pre-war film, such a shameless weeper. There is also a new interest in the rites and necessities of military organization. Above all, there is a muted pacifism at work in these films, which is often in tension with the dynamics of their plots. *They Were Expendable*, released in the flush of total victory in late 1945, is an elegy of defeat and loss and sacrifice which returns to the earliest and blackest days of the war: the Japanese invasion of the Philippines in 1942 and the sacrifice of the small detachments who held up the Japanese to gain time for the rest of us. *Rio Grande* and *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*, as Andrew Sarris has said, "abound in lyrical and metaphysical circumlocutions designed to avoid conflict and confrontation as long as possible." Indeed, the latter film builds to a battle that never takes place. Ford served in Korea, and as an old man he even did his duty in Vietnam. But the war, and working with the victims of the war at the rest home he started with his own money—and some of John Wayne's—for the veterans of his battalion, made him tenderly conscious of the fragility of the flesh, the awful cost of glory. This deeper awareness comes through in his postwar films, makes them, in Jean Cocteau's words, full of "a positive poetry."

Mr. Sinclair weaves Ford's life and art together with admirable subtlety. He never, for example, lets his excellent critical digressions on the films hold up the forward flow of his narrative, which is chiefly concerned with telling us a fascinating life story. Those who know nothing of Ford's films can therefore read this book with profit and pleasure, while those who already admire Ford will be grateful to Mr. Sinclair for adding a till now missing biographical element to their appreciation of his films.

The films themselves grow more resonant and powerful every year. I was recently at a showing of *They Were Expendable* during which the audience applauded frequently, bursting into bravos at the end. I suspect they applauded because John Ford had accomplished what Tolstoy thought only the very greatest artists in a secular culture had the power, the symbolic means, to accomplish: he had "infected" them with the spirit of the film—a spirit of endurance under suffering, of sacrifice, loyalty and community.

Is it possible that art, even an art of "positive poetry, full of faith and hope," can do anything so large? Mr. Sinclair tells a story which suggests that it can. In his great documentary, *Midway*, Ford shows us a group of sailors raising the flag while under strafing attack from Japanese planes. Even the bloodless sophisticate must be moved by the sight of these real men risking their lives to perform a ritual act which can have no bearing on the battle, but which Ford—heavyhandedly to be sure—makes us feel is the *meaning* of the battle. What Sinclair suggests is that these brave men had learned "the form" of their brave act from John Ford's films. It sounds like a clever critical conceit, but I'd like to believe it's true if only because John Ford himself could have imagined no higher praise.

Jack Beatty

The New Republic Classified

THE NEW REPUBLIC CLASSIFIED IS A WEEKLY FEATURE. Ads are accepted at the discretion of the publisher. Rates: one time ad $1/word, six ads per year $.95/word, 12 ads per year $.90/word, 24 times per year $.85/word, 48 times per year $.80/word. Telephone numbers count as 2 words. P.O. numbers and abbreviations count as one word. Zone numbers and zip codes are not counted. Additional $4.50 for TNR box numbers. Classified display ads are $30/inch. Bold headline, signature and inset available. Complete rate card upon request. Send your check/money order with your copy, or give us your Visa/MasterCharge # and we'll charge it to your account. Copy must be received 19 days prior to the Saturday issue date. Phone orders accepted with MasterCharge/Visa only. Send copy or call collect: Beth McGee, The New Republic Magazine, 1220 19th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. (202) 331-7494.

Personals

Baltimore-Washington Area Fortyish Joke Teller wishes to meet Thirtyish Woman Humorist. Object: Wedlock. TNR Box 9165.

Interesting, incarcerated Black Gentleman seeking affectionate, adventurous white Lady for adventure, fun and companionship. TNR Box 9140

YOUNG MARYLAND MAN. Caring, sensitive, well-read, shy, wants beautiful woman to share conversation, wine, laughter and the outdoors. TNR Box 9150.

Wanted—Male—Bright, Awake, Real. A little bit interested in companionship. TNR Box 9155.

DATES GALORE! Meet singles-anywhere. Call DATELINE, toll-free (800) 451-3245.

SINGLE BOOKLOVERS get the cultured, single, widowed or divorced acquainted. Nationwide. Write Box AE, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania 19081. Established 1970.

JAPANESE GIRLS MAKE wonderful Wives. We have large number of listings. Many interested in marriage. Only $1.00 brings application, photos, names, descriptions, etc. Japan International, Box 156-NR, Carnelian Bay, California 95711.

ORIENTAL LADIES want to write you. Blossoms, Stehekin, Washington 98852.

LATIN LADIES seek friendship. Write "Latins" Box 1716-NR, Chula Vista, California 92012.

CULTURED SINGLES CLUB - Discriminating singles anxious to meet you. Box 342136, Coral Gables, Florida 33134.

Professional woman, 50s, slim, attractive, interested in theatre, books, social issues wants to meet warm, sensitive male, NYC, TNR Box 9135.

"Am Jewish, tall, slender, beautiful, have sense of humor, master's degree and am a PR account executive in NYC. Am seeking a husband I can respect, love and cherish. He should be in his thirties, college educated, decent, kind, cheerful and a man to admire. Please, Sir Launcelot, wherever you are, write TNR Box 9145."

BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY. Information: NR35, RD 1 Box 409, Coopersburg, PA 18036.

Literature

PUBLICATIONS

DISARMAMENT is the most important problem facing humanity today. The quality of life—in fact, life itself—hangs in the balance. For a complimentary booklet, *Disarmament in Attitude and Action*, write World Goodwill, Dept. N, 866 U.N. Plaza, #566, New York, N.Y. 10017.

LIMITED AND TRADE editions. Fiction, nonfiction; Color, black and white. Designed, written with excellence in mind. THE TIDAL PRESS, Cranberry Isles, ME 04625. FREE CATALOGUE.

DAILY ACTIVITIES by D. Patrick Haley. Aboveground novel read by dozens: praised by Carlos Baker, Jerry Galvin, George Dekker, Annie Dillard. Cosmic, comic, deeply melancholy. $4 TNR Box #9110

FREE BOOK. Prophet Elijah Coming Before Christ. Megiddo Mission, Dept. 72, 481 Thurston Road, Rochester, New York 14619.

NO WINNERS is a humorous, provocative, insightful book by a convicted bookmaker about gamblers and convicts. Send $4.75 to Ipse Dixit Press, Box 4277, St. Paul, MN 55104.

Literary Services

Search Service Specialists. Free. No obligation. Out-Of-Print books located. Collector's lists solicited. Books Unlimited, Vaughn Hill, Bolton, Mass. 01740

STILL LOOKING FOR A BOOK? Free search service. Please write Peter Sperling Books, Dept. R, 207, E. 21st St., NY, NY 10010

WRITERS, 'PROBLEM" MANUSCRIPT? Try AUTHOR AID ASSOCIATES, 340 East 52nd Street, New York City 10022.

LITERARY AGENT SEEKS authors, book length fiction/nonfiction. Reading fee. GELLER, 4515 Twelfth Avenue, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11219.

TRY OUR INTRODUCTORY "3 for 2" offer - response nearly triples with multiple insertions. TNR Classifieds work!

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Booklet! Power and Confidence. This is an amazing volume complete with 164 pages. Guaranteed to improve your life. Send just $3.00, James March, 8035 South Steward, Chicago, Illionis 60620

PUBLISHING OPTIONS—We invented them! Comprehensive book publishing/production services for authors and organizations. Free manuscript report. Inquiries invited. Dorrance & Company, Dept. BK, Ardmore, PA 19003.

Employment Opportunities

EDITOR

Top job for leading Jewish magazine. Thorough knowledge of Jewish and Israeli affairs. Fluent Hebrew. Proven record in magazine editing and handling staff. Salary open. Box 9170.

"WHERE TO FIND JOBS IN WASHINGTON, D.C." Nation's highest salaries, challenging assignments. Thoroughly researched publication lists over 75 names and addresses. D.C.'s largest employers, clearing houses, vacany rosters, referral services, directories etc. Special women's entries. $6.00 "WHERE," P. O. Box 39112, Washington, DC 20037

Do you want to be paid to watch local TV NEWS in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, New York City, Philadelphia, St. Louis, Seattle, Washington, DC? $3.00 to $4.50 per program watched and summarized. Send qualifications to: Diane Wiseman, Electronic Clipping Service, 9200 Sunset Blvd., Suite 404, Los Angeles, CA 90069

TEACHING AND ADMINISTRATIVE positions available in elementary and secondary INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS throughout the US and abroad. Register with Robert M. Sandoe & Associates, national and international placement service. Call (toll free) 800-225-7986 or from Massachusetts (617) 262-5380.

RESUMES—Complete instructions and examples: $4, Consultants, Box 567—HH, Bergenfield, New Jersey 07621.

Sell consumer products. Good profit margin. Full/Part time. Details-Price lists $3.00. LJS Box 626 Port Chester, New York 10573

Foreign Studies

LEARN SPANISH. If you really want to learn Spanish quickly, fluently and correctly, and if you have the courage and stamina for intensive and disciplined study, come for at least one month to the Cuernavaca Language School. First month $300. Following four weeks $200. Private tutor available at $350 for 50 hours. Details: Apdo, 480, Cuernavaca, Mexico.

Research Positions

R & D POSITIONS. Chemists, Ch.E.'s Metallurgists, Mineralogists, Geologists, Physicists, Ceramics, Computers, Electronics, other. California, Texas, Mid-Atlantic, Midwest. Interview, relocation, fee paid. Chemical Executive Search, 6800 Main, Houston, Texas 77030.

Et Cetera

CRITICISM. Les James, 110 Bradford Street, San Francisco, CA 94110.

FREE catalog of "Distinguished Gifts." Write to G. Speck Enterprises, Dept. 1KZ. 819 Alston Ave., Gulfport, MS 39501

PRIVACY INSURED Your mail re-addressed. Phone for rates, evenings only (717) 253-4866 or write: Box 247, Honesdale, PA 18431

TECHNOCRACY-TECHNOLOGICAL SOCIAL DESIGN available for one dollar from Technocracy Inc., Continental Headquarters, Savannah, Ohio 44874.

Music

CLASSICAL CASSETTE CLUB. State-of-the-art sound at budget prices. Introduction offer. Box 506NR, Saddle River, NJ 07458.

CHAMBER MUSIC FURNITURE

Hardwood stands, benches, and accessories. Traditional Elegant Designs.

Early Music Stands

Free Catalog

Drawer 2400. Box 277. Palo Alto. CA 94302

Arts/Crafts

JAPANESE WOODBLOCK PRINT REPRODUCTIONS Masterpieces by Utamaro, Hokusai, Hiroshige, etc. New catalogue illustrated 600 subjects, $10.00 (seamail). No wholesale available. Adachi Institute of Woodcut Prints, CPO Box 362, Tokyo, Japan.

Bumperstickers

BUMPERSTICKERS, DECALS, BUTTONS. Low cost, custom made advertising for your Business, Special Event, Organization or Political Campaign. Buy direct from manufacturer and SAVE! Please state intended use for appropriate samples. Write for FREE Brochure, Price List and Samples. REFLECTIVE ADVERTISING INC. Dept. NR, 8551 Page Boulevard, St. Louis, Missouri 63114. Phone (314) 423-5495.

"BROWN's THE ONE" BUMPERSTICKERS, BUTTON, 2/$1. Matchbooks - 50/$2. Box 762, 681 Ellis, San Francisco, California 94109.

Property Sale/Rent

SABBATICAL? Rent/Exchange housing worldwide. LOAN-A-HOME, 18N Darwood Place. Mt. Vernon, New York 10533

Summer Rentals

Rehoboth/Dewey Beach, Delaware. Modern beach house, 3 bedrooms, loft, 2 baths. Fully equipped, AC, DW, TV, sundeck. 5 & 7 day rentals available. June-$40/day, July and Aug.-$50/day. (703) 354-6521.

Vermont, Northeast Kingdom—Log cabin with amenities. Sleeps six. Secluded lakefront, yet three minute walk to tennis court, sandy beach, canoe, sailfish. Great fishing (own electric fishing boat), swimming, hiking, bird watching. By month, week, weekend. Forwand, 9 Dunstable Road, Cambridge, Mass. 02138. (617) 491-2318.

VINALHAVEN MAINE. Mid-June/mid-August. 3 BR contemporary house on wooded point overlooking granite rocks, secluded cove, Penobscot Bay. Boats. $1200/mo. Peggy Ives, 3025 Newark St. N.W. Washington, D.C. 20008. (202) 362-4993.

Vacation/Travel

Adventure and comfort. 75 ft. ketch, available for charter Caribbean. Crew of four, sleeps six. Daily rate $90 per person, food included. Telephone 212-838-2104

Expedition

EXPEDITION 'ROUND THE WORLD. Remote places: Galapagos. Pitcairn, Easter, Tahiti, Fiji, etc. 180' Yacht. Shipmates wanted. Share expenses. Write YANKEE TRADER, P. O. Box 120, Dept. No. 2, Miami Beach, Fla. 33139

30TH ANNUAL 'ROUND THE WORLD TOUR. 8 countries, 30,000 miles. July 10th to August 9th, 1979. Reservation deadline—May 1. Free brochure: Bryan World Tours, 19 Fairview Avenue, Clarion, Pennsylvania 16214.

INTRODUCE YOUR AD TO A QUARTER MILLION READERS FOR JUST $1 A WORD!

Vacation/Travel

PUERTO RICO: Luquillo Beach House. 3 bedrooms, for rent weekly. Edward Pinney, Box 460, Gracie Station, New York, New York 10028.

*SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY OFFER. Pay for 2 ads—get # 3 FREE!,

Telephone numbers count as 2 words. P.O. numbers and abbreviations count as one word. Zone numbers and zip codes are not counted. Additional $4.50 for TNR Box #'s. (complete rate info on preceding pg.)

Send your check/money order with your copy, or give us your Visa/MasterCharge # and we'll charge it to your account. Copy must be received 19 days prior to the Saturday issue date. Phone orders accepted with Visa/MasterCharge only. Send Copy or *call collect*: Beth McGee, The New Republic Magazine, 1220 19th St., N.W., Washington, DC. 20036 (202) 331-7494

My ad reads:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

THE NEW REPUBLIC MAGAZINE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Washington Diarist

Cover-Up

Griffin Bell's decision to appoint Bert Lance as "special counsel" in the great peanut warehouse scandal investigation can only be described as a stroke of genius. Less admirable is Bell's ludicrous assertion that the man really is a New York lawyer named Paul Curran. Anyone who has seen his picture in the paper will not be taken in by this crude deception. He is Bert Lance to the jowls, or at the very least he is Jackie Gleason. It will not surprise me if only William Safire has the courage to point this out. Whoever he is, Mr. Special will now have an opportunity first to prove his integrity by ruthlessly prosecuting the lower-downs and then prove his statesmanship by letting off the top banana, just like his saintly predecessor, Leon Jaworski. Then he will write a boring book to snuff out any remaining curiosity about the affair. Here is a convenient guide to the game of special prosecutorship: if Billy isn't indicted, that means he was the top man and Jimmy is clean; if Billy is nailed, that means Jimmy really ran the show. Some may find this view overly cynical, but I'm sure Mr. Safire will agree with me.

Loyal readers may be eager for more news from my second-favorite magazine, *The National Notary*, a publication of the notary public lobby. As it happens, the March/April issue arrived a few days ago. In the last issue, you may recall, notaries indignantly rejected the view (which they apparently believe is widely held) that they are at fault for the plight of the nation's handicapped. Well, the cover-up continues. The current issue attempts to absolve notaries of responsibility for the Jonestown massacre. In a cover story entited "The Peoples Temple Notaries: A Means to an End," the magazine concedes that there were "about 15" notaries in the People's Temple, including several in Jim Jones's "inner circle." Notarized documents frequently were used to transfer people's land to the cult, or to remove children from the country. But the editors argue that "it was the high ethical standards of the Notary profession as a whole that influenced the People's Temple to have its members commissioned as Notaries." Furthermore, the article makes clear that notaries in general are as horrified as anyone else by charges that "notarial seals and signatures were placed on blank sheets of paper," along with "charges of homicide, child abduction, extortion, arson, battery, illegal drug use, diversion of welfare funds, and kidnapping." But is it fair for the world to pillory the notarial profession for these crimes? No! The lesson of Jonestown is that "it reminds the Notary of his limited duty in regard to constituents who may be pressured into signing documents . . . against their will." Nevertheless: "The concepts of notarial ethics and dutifulness to the law must not be disavowed by Notaries, even in the name of a 'greater' cause." I like those quotation marks. What "greater" cause could there possibly be than maintaining the standards of this droll profession?

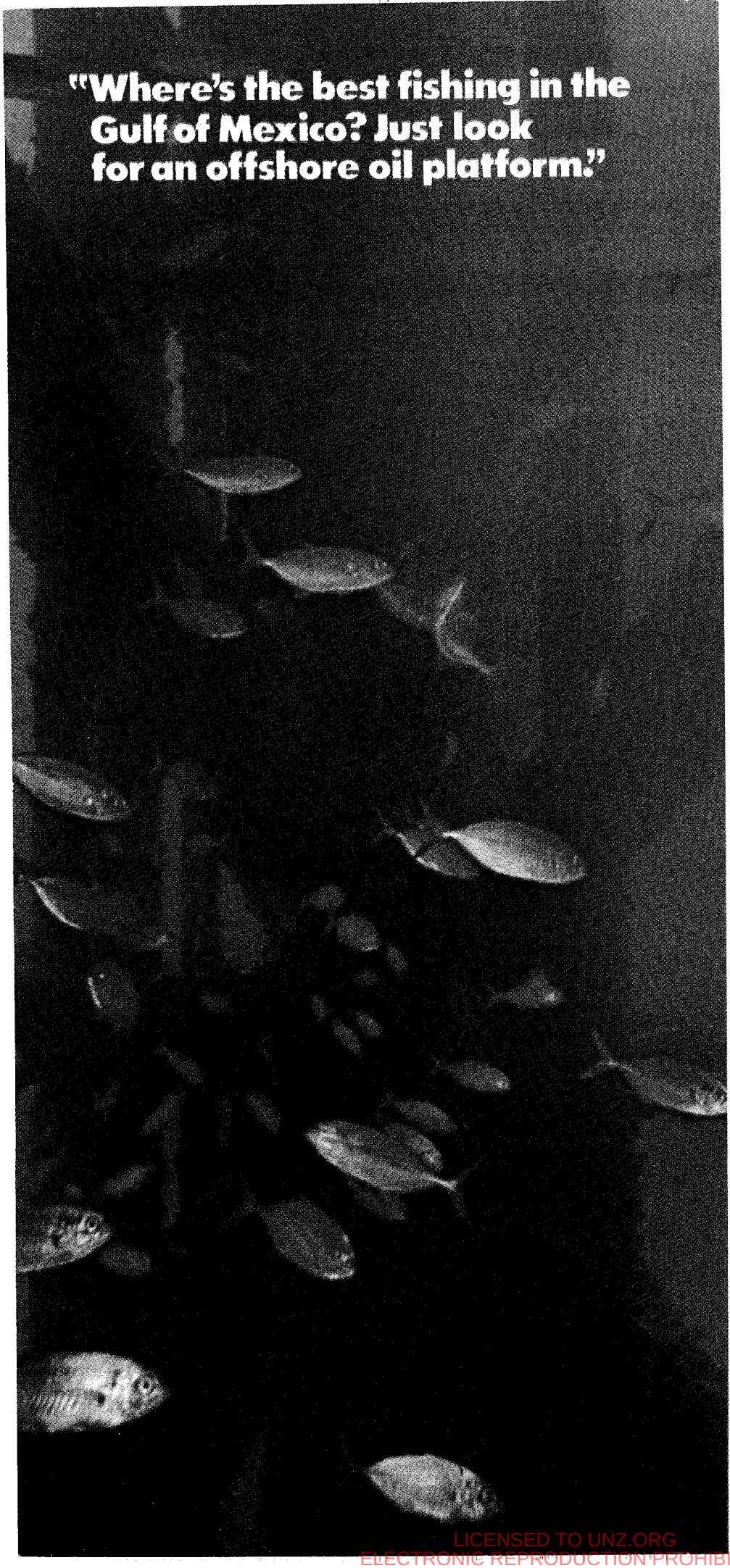
Senator Robert Dole, who refuses to be laughed out of his presidential ambitions, writes in the Sunday *New York Times*: "If we have learned anything in recent months it is that a President must provide leadership to which the American people can respond." What can this sentence possibly mean? If someone had asked Senator Dole several months ago, "Must a president provide leadership to which the American people can respond?" would he have answered, "No, don't be ridiculous"? Possibly not. Yet there are only two other logical interpretations. Either Senator Dole has not learned anything at all in recent months (likely—but would he advertise the fact?), or he doesn't mind if meaningless babble is published under his name in the nation's most prestigious newspaper. His name, by the way, is given as just plain ol' "Bob Dole." I suppose some media consultant told him this was a good idea when the current champ calls himself Jimmy.

A distressing difference of opinion has arisen between the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* concerning two current controversies. One is the new "revolving door" rules scheduled to take effect July 1, aimed at preventing high-level federal appointees from cashing in on their connections and aroma of power after they leave office. The *Times* calls the present arrangement "a cozy shuffle," while the *Post* derides the whole business as an attempt by overzealous reformers to create a "Ministry of Virtue." The other issue is the Senate's decision, by a quickie voice vote, to "postpone" (read: dump) its self-imposed limits on senators' outside earned income. The *Times* condemns this action in sentiments similar to those expressed by last week's diarist. The *Post* says that even though it supported the limit when it passed the Senate two years ago, it has changed its mind (just like Majority Leader Robert Byrd and many of his colleagues) upon reflection about the hardship of living on $66,125 a year. How can these two oracles disagree so completely? Dear Diary, what am I supposed to think? Ordinarily I find the *Times* just a bit more authoritative, but in this case I think its objectivity has been compromised by the fact that its editorial writers live in New York rather than here in Washington, and have not had to endure senators and high administration officials weeping in their soup at dinner parties while describing the suffering these rules would impose. It is very easy to sit in Manhattan and opine that hard-working public servants should not be allowed to sell their souls in order to put a few scraps of food on the table. *Times* editorialists don't need to face these people over lunch, on the street, at the club. Where is the human element, Mr. Frankel? The more I think about it, the most disgusted I get.

Jay Solomon resigned last week as head of the General Services Administration. President Carter accepted the resignation "with regret," he said. The regret, if any, is not at Solomon's return to Chattanooga, but at the fact that everybody knows (thanks to the *Post*) that Solomon's departure is the White House's idea and not his own. (As Solomon tactfully put it, he is resigning "in accordance with understandings reached in previous conversations.") Presidential aides solemnly emphasized to reporters that they don't criticize Solomon for being too lackadaisical in pursuing the GSA scandal. Damned courteous of them, since they actually objected to his pursuing it too vigorously. In particular, they were offended by his decision to fire Robert Griffin, the political hack and Tip O'Neill crony whom they had foisted upon him as GSA deputy administrator. When Griffin told his patron about this act of *lèse-majesté*, Tip came bounding up Pennsylvania Avenue screaming "Vengeance is mine," and had to be placated (for all the good it did Carter's legislative program) by giving Griffin a sinecure working for Robert Strauss, who at that time had not yet cured inflation and moved on to other triumphs. So a year after the GSA scandal broke, the man who energetically thwarted the investigation is working for the White House, while the man who energetically conducted it has been forced out. No good deed goes unpunished.

M.E.K.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



"Where's the best fishing in the Gulf of Mexico? Just look for an offshore oil platform."

"If you have any doubts, ask one of the men who run sports fishing boats in the Gulf," says H. E. Braunig, a Manager of Environmental Affairs at Gulf Oil. "When they want to guarantee their customers a good day's fishing, they head straight for the oil platforms.

"Twenty universities and thousands of fish say oil platforms don't hurt the environment."

"What happens around the bottom of the oil platforms is ecologically identical to what happens around any natural reef.

"A food chain starts. Mussels, anemones, starfish, anything that likes to live on a solid underwater surface, all come first. Then the fish that feed on them; and so on, until a whole ecosystem builds up.

"Even with the oil platforms, it's life as usual in the Gulf of Mexico—even for the commercial shrimp and oyster fishermen, whose livelihood depends on clean water.

"That's living proof that offshore platforms aren't ecologically destructive. A two-year study by twenty Gulf Coast universities, concluded in 1974, says the same thing.

"Gulf people are meeting a lot of challenges in getting the oil out while preserving the environment. This problem just seemed to solve itself; and with continual environmental monitoring and sampling, on all current and future offshore sites, we intend to make sure it stays solved."

Gulf

Gulf people: meeting the challenge.

Gulf Oil Corporation

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT SIZE ENGINE

BIGGER ISN'T NECESSARILY BETTER IN NEW, MORE EFFICIENT GM CARS.

The lighter the car, the less power it takes to move it. That's the most important thing to know when you're trying to decide what engine to order for your car.

The power-to-weight theory holds true no matter how you intend to use your car: city, highway or suburban driving; with two passengers or six; with a small trailer or pulling a heavy boat.

Since we redesigned almost all our cars to make them lighter and more efficient, the power-to-weight theory enables us to move them with smaller engines that use less gas. You can get good performance from a full-size GM car under most conditions with a six-cylinder or a small eight-cylinder engine instead of a larger optional V8. Mid-size cars, luxury cars, and redesigned compacts to be introduced this spring follow the same pattern.

To help you choose an engine, we designate one as standard for every model. It is an engine that provides enough acceleration to merge safely with traffic when entering a freeway, enough pick-up to cross a street quickly after heeding a stop sign, and in most models, even enough power to haul a trailer weighing up to 1,000 pounds.

Standard engines cost less than bigger, optional engines and get better gas mileage, especially in city traffic. There is no difference in durability between standard and optional engines. However, to get the most out of any GM engine, follow the maintenance schedule in the GM Owner's Manual. And remember, please, that small engines are as durable as large engines only if you give them the same care.

There are some reasons for choosing larger, optional engines: if you intend to carry six passengers and luggage with any frequency, if you intend to haul a trailer over 1,000 pounds, and if you expect to drive often in hilly terrain. For people who drive mainly in altitudes over 4,000 feet we offer a special high-altitude package, including a larger engine, to ensure satisfactory performance.

Finally, your own sense of how a car should "feel" must be the deciding factor. GM dealers have cars that you can take for a test drive. Take that test drive. Drive the same model with a standard and an optional engine, if the dealer has "demonstrators" with both configurations. You're the driver. Decide for yourself.

We charge more for optional engines. Even so, our honest advice is to buy the smallest engine that fits your taste and needs. You'll save money when you buy your car, and in most cases, you'll save money on gas for as long as you own it. That's the nice part of energy conservation.

This advertisement is part of our continuing effort to give customers useful information about their cars and trucks and the company that builds them.

General Motors

People building transportation to serve people

RITTER LIBRARY
BALDWIN-WALLACE COLLEGE

MAR 29 1979

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED